

# *Contemporary Religions in Japan*

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## CONTENTS

### Articles

- 1 ... The Problem of Religion and Modernization in Japan ... .. Hideo Kishimoto  
20 ... P L (Perfect Liberty) ... .. Tatsuki Yuasa  
30 ... Japan's New Religions ... .. H. Neill McFarland  
40 ... Religion and Modern Life II ... .. Yoshiro Tamura

— A Report of Three Round Table Conferences —

### Reviews

- 68 ... Ogata, Zen for the West ... .. Reiho Masunaga  
69 ... Ono, The Kami Way ... .. Charles W. Iglehart  
71 ... Keene, Living Japan ... .. The editor  
73 ... Hume, The World's Living Religions ... .. The editor

### Religious World in Japan

- 75 ... Questions and Problems  
80 ... Chronology for 1960 (April—June)

## Translations and Official Documents

88 ... Ministry of Welfare Notification :

Interpretation of Article 13 regarding cemeteries and Interment.

## News of the Institute

91 ... Apropos the Round Table Conferences

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# THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

By Dr. Hideo Kishimoto



## An Example

Numerous superstitions continue to prevail in Japan. Take, for example, the figures of Obinzuru that we can still find today in many popular temples. Usually they are wooden images in a seated posture. According to popular belief anyone with a physical disorder who touches the affected spot of his body and then touches the same spot on the image will be cured by the divine favor of Obinzuru. Thus, we have what may be called a faith-cure by means of suggestion which in itself may not be altogether meaningless. The actual harm resulting from this practice, however, must be far greater than its usefulness.

Why do so many harmful and useless superstitions prevail in such a modernized society? It is because customs that can clearly be recognized today as superstitions were once regarded as appropriate religious observances. It is only recently, a matter of a couple of generations, that the contagious nature of some diseases has become common knowledge. People formerly knew nothing about this. Consequently, it is not strange that belief in the mysterious power of Obinzuru was regarded as an excellent solution to a real human problem, that is, the cure of disease.

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

Why does Japanese society have such widespread superstitions? This cannot be understood unless the problem is considered together with the change of the times and the progress of culture. The method of solving human problems is not always the same. As times change and culture advances, the meaning of human problems also changes and, therefore, the solutions change. Former solutions can no longer be used. Such being the case, what was once an appropriate religious observance may later be regarded as a superstition. The fact that there are many out-of-date religious solutions today in Japan reflects the social situation of Japan under the heavy pressure of Westernization and modernization.

### **The Modernization of Japan**

As human society becomes modernized, man's problems change and consequently changes occur in the manner of solving human problems, including the solutions offered by religions. It must not be forgotten that religions contain permanent elements; but it is also true that they contain elements which must change with the times. If the changeable elements are kept unchanged, it may result in a religion becoming out of date and ceasing to function vitally. Taking this point as our key, I am going to consider the problem of the modernization of religion in Japan.

At the beginning of the Meiji era, that is, about a century ago, Japan began to take long strides toward modernization. Needless to say, Japanese culture in the past, even during the Tokugawa era (1603—1867), had been oriented in the direction of modernization, but progress was very slow. It was only in



## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

the Meiji era that the country suddenly began to increase its stride toward modernization.

However, in becoming modernized, Japan had to face peculiar situations very different from those of the countries with Western civilization. The modernization of Japan was not achieved solely by her own efforts. Modern Japanese culture arose as a result of the impact of modernized Western culture which was introduced to Japan after the middle of the nineteenth century. In few countries in the world, in fact, have Western civilization and the indigenous culture of a country met so thoroughly and so directly as in Japan.

Why were the Japanese people so well prepared to receive modern Western civilization, and why were they able to succeed in modernization? This is an interesting problem; but, since it has no direct connection with our subject, in this paper we will omit any discussion of it.

### Modernization and Westernization Confused

Modern Japan was successfully established only after overcoming many difficulties caused by confusion over differences between modern cultural elements and Western cultural elements. Approximately one hundred years have elapsed since the introduction of modern Western culture. The Japanese people have been generally unaware of the fact that modern Western culture includes two different elements: Western elements and modern elements. Thus, during the past century two operations were in process in Japan: Westernization and modernization.

Western cultural elements and modern cultural elements, Westernization and modernization, are different both in their

nature and meaning. Western culture has been fostered in the historic Western tradition. The modern elements which are comparatively new have come into existence along with the development of the modern age. For example, languages like English and German are a part of traditional Western culture. To eat Western food with a knife and fork is an element of traditional Western culture. Such things as railway trains, steamships, telephones, and television, however, are modern cultural elements. These two different elements have been combined to form modern Western culture; but they were introduced into Japan as one and the same thing. And the Japanese people, being unaware of this difference, accepted them as if they were the same.

Actually, however, these two elements were working in different directions, and various problems arose because they were not clearly distinguished from each other. For example, the fact that Japanese traditional religions, the so-called established religions,\* have fallen behind in modernization can substantially be explained by this confusion. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify this point in order to understand the present-day condition of religions in Japan. First, however, it is necessary to discern the distinction between Westernization and modernization.

### The Beginning of Modernization

What is meant by modernization? There appears to be quite

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\* The term "established religions" (*kisei shūkyō* 既成宗教) generally refers to the traditional denominations of Buddhism and Shinto. It does not as a rule include Christianity, Konkō-kyō or Tenri-kyō.



## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

a variety of views regarding the concept of modernization but I should like to consider the problem from a viewpoint based upon the theory of Professor Ralph E. Turner of Yale University, a scholar in the field of world history. Professor Turner tries to analyze the phenomenon of modernization in relation with the nature of the power resources which are employed in the formation of a culture. According to Professor Turner, from ancient times until the eighteenth century when modernization in a real sense began, the power resources in the formation of culture were ordinarily muscle power, primarily that of human muscles. The great pyramids, for example, were built by slave labor. Prior to the modern age there were no means of transportation driven by mechanical power. Neither trains nor airplanes existed. This meant that in order to travel there was nothing for a person to do but to walk or to use the muscle power of other men or animals. If people did not use their own muscles in riding on horseback or in palanquins, they were dependent upon the leg muscles of palanquin bearers or horses. Of course, men could utilize such simple "machines" as the wheel and lever to some extent, but they in turn were still dependent on muscle power. In other words, these "machines" played only a secondary role. Thus, the evaluation of a large majority of the people was based upon the strength of their muscles. A trained brain was not what was expected of the people. Men were valued mainly as power resources.

Especially in the West, men made great progress in understanding the laws of natural phenomena. The more they were able to develop their understanding, the more they could make use of machines to employ the power hidden in nature. In

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

other words, they were able to replace muscles with machines as power resources. This could not happen without exerting great influence on human society. This was the beginning of modernization.

As a result the position of man changed. In the past man's role had been largely limited to being a power resource, but with the development of mechanical power resources, he became the controller of machines. Consequently, the importance of the operation of his brain increased. It became necessary for man to be trained to manage machine power instead of offering his own muscle power. In modern society man's brain power has exceeded in importance his muscle power. This means education. The education of people in general has become absolutely essential.

Modern culture was ushered in by the development of mechanical power and is characterized by respect for brain power. The value of man was heightened because of his increased capacity to control mechanical power. We should not forget, however, that it was relatively late when this change took place even in Western culture. The industrial revolution, which developed from the application of machine power to the loom, is a relatively recent event in Western culture. Professor Turner says that it was only about 1750 that modernization of the West in this sense took place.

Such is not the only reason, of course, for the rise of modern Western culture. Various causes such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and democracy impelled it.

There are two main elements which constitute the backbone of modern culture. The first is science and techniques that

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

utilize the laws of natural phenomena. The second is respect for human personality. Modern culture is centered in man. The authority of the sacredness of religion, the value of art, —all of these have tended to be reevaluated in terms of man.

### Modern Culture and Western Culture Distinguished

Another important point of historical significance is that modern cultural elements came into existence in the West. They came into existence in the land where traditional Western culture had prevailed for a long time. Modern cultural elements were at the beginning something that was added to Western cultural tradition. Because it happened to arise in the West, the first modernized culture to come into existence on this globe was modern Western culture. But if its main cause was the shift in power resources from human muscles to machines, it could have also occurred in the East. It might have taken place many hundred of years later ; but it surely would have occurred even without any contact with the West. Then it would have been possible for the world to see a genuine Eastern modern culture independent of Western culture. In other words, theoretically modern cultural elements can develop in any culture. There can be a modern Eastern culture as well as a modern Western culture. Modern cultural elements can be possessed in common by all cultures.

Thus, Western cultural elements and modern cultural elements are essentially different from each other. Nevertheless, for historical reasons they occurred first in the West. Modern Western culture came into existence in a compact form. When Japan was opened to Western intercourse, it was with this



compact culture that the people came in contact. They were dazzled by its brilliance. Of course, they were utterly unaware of the distinction between the components of this compound of Western cultural elements and modern cultural elements. They merely desired by all means to whole-heartedly absorb it at once: such was their enthusiastic endeavor for the so-called "civilization and enlightenment" (*bunmei kaika*)<sup>3</sup>.

The people put up with much difficulty, confusion, inconvenience, and the hardship of a double life as a result of the coming of modern Western culture. Indeed, the new course they took was a very adventurous one. They were willing to lose their course in the raging waters of Westernization and modernization and even risk the complete destruction of their traditional way of life both for the individual and society as a whole. The new Japan, however, was gradually established. The country made great progress during the preceding century, getting somewhat hastily modernized as well as Westernized in almost every respect.

### **Buddhism and Shinto Oppose Modernization**

However, while modern Japan was being established in this way, among the so-called established religions Shinto and Buddhism by contrast appeared to be very much behind the times. Admittedly they were left behind. Yet in retrospect it is evident that a century ago, when the country was being opened, these religions were not in fact as far behind the times as is the case to-day. Certainly the excessive policy of protection adopted by the Tokugawa government had gradually deprived Buddhism

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## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

of any vitality, but it could still manage to attract popular interest. Today, however, that is, one hundred years later, what is the situation? Buddhism still remains in almost the same condition as it was at the end of Tokugawa era. In the dark interior of the main hall of candle-lit temples the priests are even now chanting sutras written in Chinese which no ordinary believer can understand.

As for Shinto, it should be noted that it provided the guiding spiritual principle for the revival of the Imperial rule : such was the vital part that it played at that time. But in present-day Japan Shinto shrines are still performing the same old pattern of ceremonies and the populace still becomes excited by the carrying about of portable shrines just as it did a century ago. Both Buddhism and Shrine Shinto are so remarkably behind the times that it makes us wonder whether or not they are deliberately turning their backs on modernization.

What can be the reason for this? There may be many reasons but, as I see it, the most important one seems to be related to the special character of modernization in Japan. As already stated, the special condition of modernization lay in the fact that Westernization and modernization were confused ; but the Japanese people in general were never aware of this. Neither were Buddhist and Shinto leaders. Both Shinto and Buddhism had been brought up in the Oriental cultural tradition. If they had been Westernized they would have lost their unique character. This was, indeed, of such vital significance to them that they had no choice but to struggle against Westernization to the utmost. Confronted as they were with modern Western culture in which the two elements were in-

distinguishably mixed, Shinto and Buddhism were, consciously or unconsciously, forced to resist and unhesitatingly reject it.

Resistance to Westernization drove them into the position of struggling against the incoming culture as a whole. Thus, they were driven into a position where, consciously or unconsciously, they had to oppose not only Westernization but modernization also. For this reason the leaders hesitated even to equip their temples and shrines with electric lights? They could not wear Western clothes in public without considerable hesitation. And they passed an important century in this way. Naturally, then, they were gradually left behind by the speedy modernization which took place in Japan. Such was the inevitable situation.

It is often said that some of the established religions are declining into a hopelessly antiquated condition. They are even criticized as having fallen too far behind to be rescued. But is this really so? The answer seems to be still in the future. If these religions are continuously forced to resist modernization, a real problem may arise for them. They may become so hopelessly out-of-date as to be nothing more than archaeological specimens.

### **The Established Religions at the Crossroads**

At present Japan is standing at the crossroads of a new development in awakening to the true meaning of modern Western culture. This new development is not limited to religious leaders. It also concerns the Japanese people in general. Present-day Japan, after a century of desperate struggle with foreign culture, has succeeded to some extent in establishing a



modern Japanese culture. The present achievement of modernization has played the role of an object lesson. As a result of it the Japanese people are now ready to draw a distinction between Westernization and modernization. At least they are approaching this point. If the Japanese generally are able to make this distinction, then the leaders of the established religions will also be ready to follow their example. Consequently, it may be possible that the established religions, which have been left behind because of their opposition to modernization, will be able for the first time to make a genuine effort to modernize without fear of Westernization.

Such a turning point as this is gradually coming in sight for the country as a whole and, once the religious leaders become aware of this, it will not be surprising if both Buddhism and Shinto are able to modernize very rapidly. For Japanese religions the question to be faced at the present stage is: what are the permanent, unchangeable elements in their religions and what elements are changeable. This time-old question is now for them most important and most worthy of careful consideration.

Now in the future, when Buddhism and Shinto become modernized, what should these religions be like? This is our last point; but before discussing it I should like to consider Christianity and the new religious movements for a moment.

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\* For an explanation of the term "new religious movements" see *Contemporary Religions in Japan*. June, 1960, p 70.

## Christianity

Christianity, which was introduced at the time of the Meiji Reformation, poses an interesting problem. It should be remembered that Christianity was introduced to Japan after it had already been well refined in Western society and was arrayed in the garb of modern religion. At the beginning the Japanese people even thought that modernization, Westernization, and Christianization were one and the same thing. There were not a few persons among the pioneers of the Meiji era who were converted to Christianity because of their desire to study English and come into contact with Western culture. The early influence of Christianity looked so strong that at one time it was thought that Japan might become Christianized before the turn of the century. However, this was not to be the case. Despite a century of evangelistic work, Christianity, including both Catholicism and Protestantism, has acquired only about 700,000 believers against the total Japanese population of more than 90 million.

Seven hundred thousand may seem like a large number until it is compared with a religion that originated in Japan at almost the same time that Christianity was introduced. Tenri-kyō, for example, was founded by an unknown peasant housewife. Its early history was one of incessant struggle under government suppression. Yet, today this religion claims two million believers. Konkō-kyō, another religion which also arose in a farm village just a century ago, is said to number about 700,000 believers. Compared with these religions Christianity, which has spent an amazingly large amount of money for evangelistic

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

work in the past one hundred years, cannot be said to have been very successful in gaining a large number of believers. It has certainly sent to Japan many talented persons backed by the prestige of modern Western culture. But why has not Christianity spread more widely? It may, of course, be partly because Christianity is too highly refined. A refined religion is more difficult to propagate than a religion devoted to the immediate welfare of man, as in the healing of illness; but there seem to be other reasons working also that are related to the problem of modernization.

One reason may be that Christianity, although it was introduced arrayed in modern vestments, has not been a champion of modernization in Western society. On the contrary, its role has been almost the other way around in the contemporary West. Therefore, Christianity could not take a lead in the modernization movement in this country. Even the Japanese people, who could not discern the difference between the two elements of modernization and Westernization, at a fairly early time clearly perceived the distinction between the modernization of Japan and its Christianization.

Another reason seems to be the fact that many people connected with Christian evangelism, including missionaries from abroad as well as Christians in Japan, confused the self-admitted superiority of Christianity with the superiority of modern Western culture. As a result of this they seem to have developed too much self-confidence regarding the Western cultural elements imbedded in Christianity. They introduced Christianity into Japan in a form which was deeply dyed with the color of Western culture and they neglected to remold Christianity



## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

so as to adapt it to the Japanese people and Japanese culture. Unquestionably this was an unnatural process and it certainly did not help the wider propagation of Christianity. Some Japanese Christians seem to be engaged in a reconsideration of their position, —an attitude that is worth watching,

### **New Religious Movements**

In regard to the new religious movements, many of which seem to contain a large number of pre-modern elements, why are they attracting so many people in modernized Japan? Social unrest after World War II and the inactivity and inability of the established religions must account in large measure for this. In that period people had many urgent problems which the established religions were unable to solve. There was a spiritual vacuum. This was undoubtedly the main reason for the new development. Another reason, however, seems to lay in facts related to modernization. Many new religious organizations that boasted of their prosperity did not stick to the traditional ways of doing things. They did not fear the modernization of their structures and activities. Instead, many of them actually added modern elements somewhat drastically. Without doubt this helped them to become prosperous.

### **Religions in the Future**

Now, finally I should like to take up the problem of these religions—the traditional Japanese religions, Christianity, and the new religious movements. What will they become when society and culture have become more modernized?

There is a so-called modern view which regards all religion

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

as nothing more than a relic of the past. Such a view claims that as society is modernized religions fade away little by little into insignificance and that ultimately they will become only museum specimens. This may be true if we limit religion to only the stereotyped phases of the established religions. It depends on how religion is defined. As long as religion is understood as having a role in solving the ultimate problems of human beings, it cannot be thought that it will fade away easily. Of course, it would be a real achievement if an ideal society were to be realized in which no problems remained unsolved and no religion were needed; but this is hardly to be expected.

In this regard religion is comparable to a doctor. Nothing would be more desirable than to have all diseases and illness eliminated so that no doctor would be needed; but such an age will hardly come to pass and, until it does, doctors will be indispensable. Likewise, religion will continue to exist as long as human problems remain which no other means can solve.

Yet, even though religion does continue to exist, what sort of religion will it be, and in what form will it remain? I do not think that religions worthy of fulfilling their duty in modernized society will be necessarily in the same form as they have in the past. Religions are destined to change. In order to solve the problems of modernized people, religions must modernize.

### **In Harmony with Science**

From the viewpoint of the fundamental character of modern

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

culture, which I have just examined, two points may be noted regarding the nature of religions in the future. In the first place, religions will become more consistent with science. The development of modern culture started from the discovery and utilization of natural law. Science and techniques form the basis of modern society. As John Dewey has said, as far as natural phenomena are concerned, truth is one and there "is but one method of ascertaining fact and truth—that conveyed by the word scientific in its most general and generous sense."\*

Therefore, belief in superstitions and miracles, which have hitherto been abundantly found in religions, especially in Japan, will disappear in the future. However, the fact that religion depends upon science should not be understood to mean that the role and field of religions is altogether violated. Even people who live in modern society and depend on scientific knowledge have innumerable human problems which cannot be solved by scientific knowledge alone. There are many problems that are rooted in the realm of value that cannot be solved by science.

### **Humanistic, Man-centered**

In the second place, religions will become more human-value centered. It is the modern way to give new valuation to the social system and the pattern of culture in terms of human values. Moderns have made every endeavor to destroy the political state in which the authority of the state is more high-

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\* John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934) p. 33.



ly esteemed than fundamental human rights. Man has been trying to reconstruct such cultural patterns as could be built up only at the cost of great human sacrifice. It is one of modern man's fundamental convictions that each human life is of ultimate value. Religion in the future will focus on this position. The giving of true happiness to each man, or showing him how to find the ideal life worth living in its true sense, will become central in religion.

The idea that religions are absolute because of their own inherent sanctity which demands man's total obedience will gradually disappear. The concern of modern religious leaders must be primarily with man. No one but he who can share suffering with a man in agony will be regarded as worthy to be called a religious leader. Religious leaders who seek their own personal advancement in the already established religious hierarchies, or who exploit religion for personal vantage, will cease to exist. If religions combine the scientific spirit and humanism, they will assume vital responsibilities and become indispensable even in modernized society.

### **The Domain of Religion**

At the same time the domain of religion may possibly become narrower than it has been. This means that religion will become more genuine. In the early stages religion preempted all phases of human life as its domain. Gradually, however, this has diminished as various cultural domains separated from it and became independent. Philosophy developed from mythology and science from magic. Theocracy became democracy, and religious charity became secular social welfare

work. This tendency has not yet come to an end. It must be recognized that this process is still going on today.

Then, in present-day Japan what is still to be separated from religion? At the moment there is one cultural phenomenon which seems to be in the process of establishing its independence. This is recreation. There is a new tendency for recreation to become an independent cultural realm. Japanese religions in the past have included a good deal of recreation for the populace within their domain. Such religious practices in Japan as visiting temples, pilgrimages to the Grand Shrine of Ise, mountain-worship, and carrying portable shrines at festivals will gradually fade away with the independent development of recreation. A religion that will become empty when it no longer functions in the area of recreation will not be worthy of propagation in the future.

### **Permanent Problems for Religion**

What kind of human problems then will remain for religions to solve in the future? For one thing the problem of death will remain in the hands of religion, —death being something that man cannot easily solve. But the problem of death will not be limited to simply the problem of life after death. Religion should also enable people to view the whole span of life in a proper perspective. It is religion's task to teach people how to think about human problems in their proper relationship with all human life. Furthermore, man's life will always be enriched by having an ultimate ideal which is worth pursuing with wholehearted enthusiasm. Religion will continue to fill the role of finding what the ultimate ideal should be. And

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION IN JAPAN

the way to cultivate an unwavering attitude, which can cope with worry or unrest, will also continue as a function of religion. These functions will endure to constitute the role of religion in life.

This is, however, a problem far away in the future. For the time being, in spite of the modernizing progress of society, various kinds of the same old human problems are left unsolved. As in the past their solution will continue to be the task of religion.

To recapitulate, then, recognizing that religion is bound to continue to exist in the future, this will not be because religion itself has a sanctity apart from human values. Man does not live for the sake of religion. Nor does religion exist for the sake of religion. Religion is, indeed, for man. As long as human problems exist, which only religion is able to face, religion will remain.

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**Note:** The above manuscript was transcribed from tapes loaned by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation, translated, edited, submitted to the author for correction, and then re-edited. Whenever possible expressions preferred by the author have been retained in the final draft. Editor.



## P L ( PERFECT LIBERTY )

# PL

By Tatsuki Yuasa

Each human being is born with a unique personality. Happiness exists where each individual is able to express his own unique characteristics. PL teaches people how to do this.

When an individual is able to express his character perfectly, when all people are able to express their unique characters perfectly, there should be no strife among mankind. Strife arises when it is not possible for different individuals to express their own unique natures. The fact that there is strife is a manifestation of the fact that the unique characteristics of each individual are not perfectly realized. In daily life we see many instances in which this perfect expression does not take place. Why? How does this happen? The reason is explained by PL.

PL teaches that life is art. Life itself is art. Every individual has some image of the life which he wishes to create in this world and which has to be translated into concrete form in daily life. Therefore, each image also has its own individual characteristics. When the process of translating this image into ones daily life takes place smoothly and perfectly, one is clearly very happy. PL regards this daily earthly life as the stage on which this process should take place. Art need not necessarily be sought after only in the form of painting, liter-

## P L (PERFECT LIBERTY)

ature, music, sculpture, or any other form of so-called art as it is generally understood by people. Life itself, daily life, can be transformed into art. Daily life itself should become art, perfect and happy. This is the ideal preached by PL.

The longing for beauty is intuitive. It is inherent in every human being. This beautiful image must be realised in concrete form. This can be said to be the purpose of life. Therefore, PL says that the life of man consists in self-expression.

In actual life, however, many things happen which do not seem to be beautiful. For instance, if health is considered an object of beauty, then illness is not beautiful. If harmony, a state of non-strife, is considered an object of beauty, then strife is not beautiful.

Sometimes people harbour greed or envy or an obstinate feeling. All these are not beautiful. They are negative and are not desired by man. A desire for the beautiful is an inherent characteristic of man. The fact that people do not wish to have these negative feelings can be said to be proof that man's inherent nature is good and beautiful. In short, PL attaches much importance to sentiment or feeling ; but this sentiment or feeling is given a broader meaning in PL than is usually adopted in psychology. For instance, not only the feelings of anger and sadness, but other things as well are also included in this category. So in a way it can be said to be a sort of life-feeling, a living feeling.

All sentiment related to daily life,—for example, sometimes a person sticks to one idea, or gets the notion that he is a big, a very important person, or he hungers after material

## P L (PERFECT LIBERTY)

gain ; — all these things are included in the PL idea of “ sentiment ” or “ feeling.” All such feelings, all the inclinations of human beings arise when people become enslaved by these feelings or sentiments. Then it becomes impossible to carry out the expression of ones unique individuality. When these undesirable sentiments arise, they tend to destroy or reduce the ability of each individual to achieve a perfect expression of his unique personality.

In practice it is not so easy to attain to this ideal state. On the contrary, there are many cases in which illness, strife with other people, or failure in business occur. If such undesirable things happen, one can say that they come as a result of inappropriate sentiments or feelings, that there has been some deviation from the ideal direction toward which one should proceed. In other words, PL teaches that everything that happens in actual life is determined by one's way of thinking. If there is an undesirable inclination, then actual life will show a pattern in accordance with that undesirable inclination. Therefore, if undesirable things happen in actual life, one may conclude that there has been some deviation, some undesirable inclination, in his way of thinking. This is the way PL teaches people to analyze their own lives.

It is very difficult for a person to become aware of his own peculiar, undesirable inclinations, because the more earnestly one thinks about one's own character, the deeper becomes his own peculiar way of thinking. Therefore, it is not so easy to detect these deviations or undesirable things in ones own innermost feelings. In other words, in such cases there is a lack of objectivity. Nevertheless, the peculiar, undesirable



## P L (PERFECT LIBERTY)

deviations or inclinations must be eradicated. They must be corrected so that self-expression may take place perfectly and objectively. So there is great need to realize one's own peculiar inclination and undesirable mentality, and to correct one's attitude. If this is done, then one may proceed confidently to build up a new pattern of life. The mental state, after correcting deviations and undesirable characteristics, is a state of beautiful harmony with one's environment. It brings not only equilibrium within one's self but beautiful harmony with one's surroundings.

To summarize what has been said thus far, if one has undesirable inclinations, they will express themselves in concrete form in one's daily life. This must be detected and realized. But if a person is unable to do this for himself, then he must get guidance from someone having objectivity, someone who can give objective comments and objective judgement. Each individual can learn what has to be corrected and how he has to analyze, review, and correct his conduct in life. So each follower of PL must try to carry out the teaching given him by teachers qualified to give such advice. Then each follower can live a life without fault, that is to say, a life in which one's own unique personality is perfectly expressed. At least each follower must try his best to attain this state.

In this process there is a very important factor which plays a very great role, that is, God (Mioya Ōkami<sup>a</sup>). Something that is inestimably greater than one's self. So each follower, in order to attain the perfect state, must pray to God that he may correct his way of thinking. He must pray that the

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a. 大元靈

beautiful harmony with all his environment will not be disturbed, and that his undesirable inclinations will not crop up in daily life. Such a prayer must be very sincere and intense. In other words, PL teaches that the proper and valuable thing in one's self is to be expressed with the help of God. However, that which gives spiritual guidance, that which gives spiritual advice, is not God but the Patriarch (Oshie Oya<sup>v</sup>) of PL.

Naturally the prayers of the believers are offered to God, but because of the language barrier, the response to prayer is not given by God directly. Although God does not communicate through human language, he does give warnings in the form of illness, failure in business, or strife with other people. These can be regarded as divine warnings that something is wrong with one's way of thinking. The trouble is, however, that this is not realized by the person concerned. In PL phraseology this experience is called *Mishirase*<sup>b</sup> that is, something known by God. The real actual meaning of *Mishirase* is interpreted by the Patriarch, and explained in human language.

There are many more things I would like to discuss and more details of PL that I could explain, but I think it would be better to have questions and then from the questions explain in more detail.

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Q : How is the Patriarch different from the ordinary follower? What experience did he have that enables him to understand God? 、

Mr. Yuasa : In the beginning the Patriarch himself was just

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a. 教主 b. 神示

## P L (PERFECT LIBERTY)

an ordinary person who could not distinguish between the warning of God and other things ; but after very strenuous training he acquired spiritual eyes to make the distinction. In the beginning there was a man named Mr. Tokumitsu Kanada,<sup>a</sup> who subjected himself to innumerable kinds of austerities, or spiritual training, and discovered a way of salvation whereby he could attain great spiritual heights. Among other things he discovered that all human suffering is a divine warning to mankind. The father of the present Patriarch became a disciple of this Kanada and after much training gradually came to understand the meaning of these divine warnings. Of course, Kanada himself understood this to some extent, but not deeply.

The present Patriarch studied under his father, the former Patriarch, and after undergoing much training he at last succeeded in attaining a state in which he could distinguish between appropriate things and inappropriate things. This mental or spiritual qualification of the Patriarch will continue also in the future. It will not end with the physical death of the present Patriarch. The ideal of all PL followers is to acquire this spiritual qualification. Consequently, in the future the number of people who can give appropriate spiritual advise will gradually increase. Even at present there are two or three followers who have attained a high degree of spiritual insight. Therefore, although the present Patriarch is the one who has attained the highest spiritual level, when he dies he will be succeeded by one of those who are spiritually the highest, and this line of succession will never cease. In other religions there is a founder, but we have no founder. We can have many

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a. 金田徳光



## P L (PERFECT LIBERTY)

Patriarchs. There will always be a living Patriarch. Each Patriarch will be a different person, but they will all be the same in spirit and function,

Q : Will you please tell us about the ceremony in which the Patriarch takes on the sins of the believers ?

Mr. Yuasa : The Patriarch gives the teaching (*mioshie*<sup>a</sup>) to the followers and the followers obey this teaching. When a follower receives a warning in spite of his observance of the teaching, it is the Patriarch and not the follower who is responsible to God for the warning. Each month there is a meeting in which the believers participate for the purpose of transferring their responsibility to the Patriarch. Prayers are offered there in order to make it possible for the Patriarch to bear responsibility for the sins of the past month. At this ceremony God will bless him and give him strength.

Q : Tell us about the organization and activities of PL.

Mr. Yuasa : The headquarters are in a suburb of Osaka called Tondabayashi, where there is a Sacred Hall for the object of worship, a school, a gymnasium, a golf course, three baseball diamonds, a hospital, administration offices, etc. Last summer the newspapers said there were 150,000 people there for the festival. We have no exact count. As a rule there are between twenty and thirty thousand for this festival. About five thousand can stay overnight in the dormitories in the case of festivals and training courses.

Q : What is the object of worship ?

Mr. Yuasa : The name of God is Mioya Ōkami, a universal God. The Patriarch has made it possible for the

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a. みおしえ

followers to seek this God in the symbol of *Omitama*<sup>a</sup> which, after the Patriarch's deep prayers and real spiritual communication with them, are placed in all branches, where teachers reside, as well as in the headquarters.

Q: How many attend worship services?

Mr. Yuasa: Morning worship was once emphasized and at that time people gathered in the 400 or 500 branches at five o'clock in the morning in summer and six o'clock in winter. Now the halls are so small that the emphasis has changed to small home meetings where there may be only five or six present. Those people who like to may come for services of prayer, testimony, and preaching. Emphasis is also placed on personal guidance. One teacher sometimes has to counsel as many as one hundred believers a day. In Kobe (Mr. Yuasa's church- Ed.) there are eight teachers for about 5,000 members. If each teacher handles fifty a day, then 400 different believers are given counsel every day.

In Nagoya, in addition to the morning service, 3,000 people gather each day at the headquarter's building. At about a hundred small meeting places at least five or six attend but the average is twenty to thirty for each meeting. In Tokyo you are welcome to visit any of the branches, such as Shibuya, Ueno, Ebara and Ogikubo.

Q: Why was the pre-war organization (*Hito-no-michi*<sup>b</sup>) suppressed?

Mr. Yuasa: The reason was its enormous growth and its organization. PL has a group system. Five members make up a unit. The leader makes it six. Five units make a group

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a. 大神靈 b. ひとのみち

of thirty persons. In Hyogo<sup>a</sup> there are almost two hundred groups. These are divided into nine districts, each of which has a chief. The chiefs get spiritual instruction directly from the leader. When the leader delivers his sermon, he gives the essence in writing to the nine chiefs who in turn pass it on to the two hundred groups, and then to some 1000 units. Thus, everything can be communicated very quickly. Before the war the military leaders did not like this and, although we were quite innocent, out of fear they accused us of lese majesty and disrespect for the Grand Shrine at Ise.

Q : Are there any scriptures ?

Mr. Yuasa : Not yet. We have nothing like the Christian Bible. There is a small book used for chanting prayers, but apart from this each one gets his spiritual guidance from the Patriarch.

Q : Are the personal counsellings based on teachings or on psychology ?

Mr. Yuasa : Both. Counselling consists not only in transmitting teachings given by the Patriarch but also in analyzing the mental condition of the believer concerned. For example, the psychological factor is called the *shinri*<sup>b</sup> in PL. This is the hurrying mind, or the mind of one who goes too fast. While the mind is already there, the physical body is here. Therefore, a person's physical body is minus his mind and that is very dangerous. Deep analysis takes place and concrete steps are suggested by the local teacher.

Q : How is the Patriarch chosen ?

Mr. Yuasa : The Patriarch selects his successor. He knows

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a. 兵庫 b. 真理



the men among his followers who have reached the highest spiritual attainment. The Patriarch also decides who has attained spiritual enlightenment.

Q: What is the definition of God?

Mr. Yuasa: This is impossible to explain in a word, but it is different from what you understand by God in Christianity. Our God is not omnipresent or all-powerful. It may be said that all existence is the body of God. All existence is also the shades and shadows of God. God in PL has no characteristics like human beings. God is "Law" (*Hō*).<sup>\*</sup> The God of PL is like the law of gravitation and has no tangible characteristics.

**Note:** (1) Mr. Yuasa's talk is one of a series of talks on Modern Religious Movements sponsored by the Institute. Others in the series will appear in subsequent issues of *Contemporary Religions in Japan*.

(2) The romanization of Japanese terms used by PL in its publications is as follows:

God=*Me-oya-oh-ka-me*

Patriarch=*O-shi-eh-o-ya*

*Mishirase*=*Me-shi-ra-say*

Teaching=*Me-o-shi-eh*

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\* 法 The Buddhist *dharma*.

# THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

By H. Neill McFarland

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## 4. *PL Kyōdan*

A few of the New Religions have adopted rather bizarre titles incorporating English words or Japanese transliterations of English words. One such sect is PL Kyodan ("Perfect Liberty Church"), a post-war revival of a pre-war movement known as Hito-no-Michi ("Way of Man"), which was begun in Osaka in 1925 by Miki Tokuhara, father of the originator and present leader of PL Kyodan. Hito-no-Michi was dispersed by the war-time cabinet, and most of the members disbanded. However, a few of the most ardent devotees maintained the ideals of the movement "underground" until the granting of religious freedom after the war made possible their open proclamation again. The movement

was reborn in PL Kyodan in 1946. The reorganizer of the sect in its present form is Miki Tokuchika who continues to serve the Order as its Master Teacher or *Oshie-oya*, an office which is comparable to that of the Shimbashira in Tenrikyo, except that it is not necessarily hereditary.

The object of worship in the PL Order is *Mioya-O-Kami* ("Parent God"), who has no connection with any of the traditional deities of Japanese mythology. Indeed, the PL Kyodan is a monotheistic religion, though a very tolerant one. The Order teaches that other religions worship the one God according to different understandings of him.

The distinctive creed of this sect is set forth in twenty-one "Precepts

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

for Conduct in Life.”<sup>7</sup> These are believed by the members of the Order to have been revealed to the Founder at Hiroshima in 1947.

1. Life is Art.
2. The whole life of the individual is a continuous succession of Self-Expressions.
3. The individual is a manifestation of God.
4. We suffer if we do not manifest our self.
5. We lose self if we are swayed by our feelings.
6. Our true self is revealed when our ego is effaced.
7. All things exist in mutual relation to one another.
8. Live radiantly as the Sun.
9. All men are equal.
10. Bring mutual happiness through our expression.
11. Depend on God at all times.
12. There is always a way peculiar to every name.
13. There is one way for men, and there is another for women.
14. All things exist for World Peace.
15. Our whole environment is the

mirror of our mind.

16. All things make progress and development.
17. Grasp the heart of everything.
18. At every moment man stands at the crossroads of good and evil.
19. Practice at once whatever your first inspiration dictates.
20. Attain the perfect harmonious state of mind and matter.
21. Live in Perfect Liberty.

The essence of the PL doctrine is included in the first article of the creed: “Life is art.” To every individual there has been given a personality that innately is both unique and precious. The happiness and meaningfulness of each life depends upon the full and free expression of one’s personality. Just as the “professional” artist expresses his personality by that technique and in that medium which constitute his forte, so every person should create art through the expression of his true self in the work that is his to do. As the Master Teacher says it: “When one sets one’s whole mind on washing or sweeping or any other

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<sup>7</sup> *Perfect Liberty: How to Lead a Happy Life* (Tondabayashi, Japan: PL Kyodan, n.d.).

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

work, one's true personal quality is expressed in it. Then, those works have been elevated to art."<sup>8</sup> Thus, the "artistic life" is the only way to true happiness and real satisfaction.

If, in the course of such a life, a misfortune such as illness or accident should occur, one must know that the event is God's warning (his parental admonition) that some deviation from the way has taken place. Relief from misfortune then awaits the discovery of the deviation and the manner of its correction. In general, misfortunes are regarded as *gasho* ("ego-phenomena"), manifestations of an overweening self-consciousness which occur when man forgets that he exists only by the grace of God. However, to learn the exact nature of a particular offense, one must turn to the Master Teacher (or one of a very few other sanctioned consultants) for a *kokoroe* ("precept" or "instruction") which is applicable to his situation. The Master, who is said to be always

praying and to live in "conformity to God," is able to diagnose the nature and cause of each misfortune and to prescribe a corrective. An interesting but rather obscure aspect of this role of the Master is his ability and willingness, in certain emergency situations when there is insufficient time for instruction, to make himself a sacrifice for the believer—that is, to experience "vicarious suffering"—until such time when instruction can be given. The presence of such a man, in whom the wisdom of God is believed to reside, has made unnecessary the development of a scripture.

The PL Kyodan now has about 600,000 followers. Most of these are urban dwellers, but otherwise they are not typed according to particular social strata. Reportedly, a wide range of occupations and professions is represented among them. The organization and program of the Order is highly centralized. Though the leaders are interested in an international out-

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8 Miki Tokuchika, "The True Way of Life" (An unpublished essay in typecript), p. 1. A copy was given to me on the occasion of a visit to the PL Kyodan headquarters at Tondabayashi on May 11, 1957.



## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

reach, the Order is as yet too young to support a foreign missionary program.

At the present time much of the energy of PL Kyodan is directed toward the development of their headquarters on an extensive acreage in a hilly and wooded area in Tondabayashi near Osaka. Most of the present buildings are only temporary structures, and it is evident that it will be a long while before their elaborate plans for permanent installations will be realized. In the development of this area, a major emphasis is being placed on youth and recreation. At the time of my visit (May 11, 1957), an eighteen-hole golf course and three baseball diamonds were being constructed. A labor force for the latter project is supplied by the PL Youth Association, whose members come in groups for four-day training periods, and perform manual labor as a part of their training. The leaders of the Order also aspire to make their headquarters a renowned beauty spot. To this end they have made a lake and have spanned it by an artistic red bridge. The hills around the lake have been

cleared of pine trees and planted with cherries, in the hope that within a few years this place will become one of the most famous cherry-viewing sites in Japan. The excitement of helping to create their own haven, or even heaven, is one of the important motivations and cohesive factors in the development of PL Kyodan.

### 5. *Ittoen*

In the hills just east of Kyoto there is a unique religious community called Ittoen ("Garden of One Light") which has as its founder and leader a saintly octogenarian by the name of Nishida Tenko. The movement which centers in this establishment is sometimes likened to the early Franciscan movement, and the leader, known affectionately to his followers as Tenko San, is often called by others the St. Francis, the Gandhi, or the Tolstoy of Japan.

The ideal life of Ittoen is one of total dependence upon God. It is characterized by five aspirations:

(a) A life of non-possession.

(b) A life of repentance and abiding in God.

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

(c) The worship of God through all religious truths.

(d) Service of love, performed without hope of reward.

(e) The establishment of a heavenly kingdom upon earth.

God in Ittoen is called *Ohikari* ("Light") and is conceived as the the Essence of all religions. In this concept, as in a number of other aspects, Ittoen is conspicuously syncretistic. While the life of this community is pre-eminently the product of the faith and genius of Tenko San, he has been influenced by various religions, notably Buddhism and Christianity. This is nowhere more evident than in the principal symbol by which the community represents the object of its worship. It is a composite symbol consisting of a Christian (Greek) cross and a Buddhist swastika combined into a single circular figure and superimposed upon a light from which twelve rays emanate. The same concept is expressed in the arrangement of the sanctuary. In it there are three altars. The one in the center is dedicated to Ohikari; those which flank it on the right and left re-

present respectively the essence of Buddhism and the essence of Christianity.

Throughout Japan there are perhaps five hundred persons who endeavor to live by the principles of Ittoen, but the movement centers in the colony near Kyoto where two or three hundred residents share a communal life in company with their leader. They have few possessions. Their clothing, food, and living quarters are adequate but quite plain and coarse. Each day is lived according to a rather rigid schedule which makes provision for regular early morning and evening worship and places a special emphasis upon hard work. For the children there are schools, but the youngsters too are expected to contribute their labor. Much of the work is for the support of the community. There is cleaning and maintenance work to be done on the buildings and grounds; there is a printing press to be run; there are fields and animals to be tended. However, the community also undertakes to serve others, usually by performing such demeaning tasks as cleaning streets and rest

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

rooms, without seeking remuneration for their work.

The way of life which characterizes this movement was initiated by Tenko San in 1905. Having entered a career in business some years earlier, he found unbearably repulsive the ugly struggle for existence in which he was involved. It seemed to him that the desire to live and flourish that drive a man to put self-concern above the regard for others and leads him to fight and cheat in his struggle for material gains has been through the centuries the cause of mankind's confusion. In his revulsion Tenko San renounced such a life and resolved either to live penniless apart from meaningless struggle or to die. On the third day of his homelessness, the faith which was to govern his life was born as he heard a baby cry for its mother's milk. This cry he interpreted as a message from God. As the mother responds to the baby's cry, he conjectured, so God assumes responsibility for the life of man in this world. Man can live in dependence upon God; indeed, this is the natural way for him to live.

Thus, Tenko San began a new experiment in living. He would live in the streets and possess nothing except a single coarse garment. He would eat nothing that must be acquired by struggle. He would do all the good for others which he possibly could do without considering the disagreeable nature of his work or hoping for reward. The results seemed to validate his faith. A sufficiency of the essentials of life was forthcoming, and in addition the example of his selflessness was awakening in others an awareness of their need for repentance and for the renunciation of materialistic standards. He was, of course, regarded by some as a mad man. At times he was also suspected by the government. But eventually he won the respect of the nation and attracted to himself persons who desire to follow his way of life. There came a time also when those who were renouncing possessions wished to give them to Ittoen. Since it would have been a violation of his principles to accept them personally, Tenko San permitted the establishment of an incorporated foundation

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

to hold and manage property for the benefit of the life of Ittoen.

On December 30 and 31, 1956, I was the guest of Tenko San and his community. I was privileged to observe and to share in various phases of their life and to have three conferences with the saintly leader himself. As we conferred on the last day of the year, he told me that at midnight he would leave Ittoen and return "home"—by which he meant to say that he would go back to the streets which were his real abode. Ittoen, he said, could not be considered as his home but only as his place of service during the year. If it should be the will of the community that he should return, their representatives would seek him out on the following day and invite him back. Now, it is obvious that this procedure has only a symbolical significance. Tenko San is too old to live in the streets as once he did. Ittoen is his home, and he is the acknowledged and much respected leader of the community which he founded. However, in order to keep alive the ideal of homelessness and non-possession of material things,

he repeats this ritual at each year's end.

He is, in any event, a remarkable and admirable man whose life is an application of that exhortation of Jesus which he has taken as one of his mottos: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

### 6. *Rissho-kosei-kai*

Possibly the fastest-growing sect in Japan at the present time is Rissho-kosei-kai, a derivative of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism. Founded in 1938, this movement had only 1,000 devotees by 1945 at the end of World War II. It now claims a membership of 1,500,000. This sect has two founders, Mr. Niwano Nikkyo, president of the society, and Mrs. Naganuma Myoko, vice-president. People of lowly social origin and little formal education, they met in Reiyu-kai, another Nichiren off-shoot, and subsequently seceded from it in order to organize their own independent society. Their headquarters, already extensive but still being expanded, are in the outskirts of Tokyo.

In terms of its own expressed



## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

aim, Rissho-kosei-kai aspires to lead out in a revival of Buddhism. This is evident in the summary of its purpose which headquarters shares with inquirers. It reads as follows :

Adoring the Eternal Lord Buddha Sakyamuni as the Supreme Being, complying with the Scriptures of the Lotus of Perfect Truth and practicing the morality of the Bodhisattva, we aim to accomplish the perfect character and establish the Kingdom of peace and happiness.<sup>9</sup>

This statement coupled with an emphasis on services commemorating Saint Nichiren (1222—1282) would tend to identify the sect as essentially a Buddhistic movement. However, its really distinctive aspects are more typical of the broader range of Japanese popular religion.

For example, not only is reverence for ancestors a point of major emphasis, but also the devotees are encouraged to believe that ignorance or neglect of the ancestors may be the cause of ill-health or unhappiness among the living. This belief, therefore, figures

prominently in the healing rites of the sect ; for the healer's diagnosis of illness is often a pin-pointing of some neglect of the ancestors. Furthermore, divination of various sorts, with occasional tragic consequences, is generally practiced.

Another notable feature of Rissho-kosei-kai is the care with which the members are instructed. I was much impressed by this fact on the occasion of a brief visit to the sect's Tokyo headquarters. My visit happened to correspond with the period of daily worship and instruction, and I was granted the privilege of observing these activities. The devotees had gathered in a large modern building which had three spacious assembly rooms, one above the other, identically equipped with a worship center and the traditional mat-covered floor. Though this was just a normal day, several thousand people, mostly women, were present. When the worship had ended, the people divided into "buzz" groups which, so I learned, were study sections.

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9 "A Summary of the Rissho Kosei Society" (Typescript). A document given to me on the occasion of a visit to the Rissho-kosei-kai headquarters at 27 Wadahoncho, Suginami-ku, Tokyo, on May 28, 1957.

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

Each group had its appointed leader whose task it was to instruct the members and to answer their questions, which oftentimes are associated with needs of a very personal sort. Frankness of a type which the Japanese usually shun is characteristic of these sessions.

It should also be said that Rissho-kosei-kai sponsors many types of group activities, such as pilgrimages, festivals, building projects, drama, and concerts, and that it promotes evangelistic work among the inmates of reformatories and prisons. Within its headquarters precinct the sect maintains a hospital,<sup>10</sup> a nursery school and kindergarten, lower and upper secondary schools for both boys and girls, and a library.

### 7. *Soka-Gakkai*

Another movement derived from the Nichiren sect of Buddhism is Soka-Gakkai ("Value-Creation Association"). This group, which was

founded in 1940, recently has become the most inflammatory of all the "New Religions." Retaining all of the fanatical intolerance of Nichirenism, the devotees of Soka-Gakkai apparently are endeavoring to spearhead a revolution in Japan. Their avowed political aspirations and their unscrupulous techniques of propagation are becoming increasingly alarming to many Japanese.

I have had no personal contact with Soka-Gakkai, but, particularly during the spring of 1957, I followed with interest the newspaper accounts of its activities. This report is a digest of newspaper clippings rather than a description of the sect.<sup>11</sup>

In June of 1957 it was reported that Soka-Gakkai held three seats in the House of Councillors of the National Diet and nearly sixty seats in various local government assemblies. It is the announced goal

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<sup>10</sup> As in the case of Tenri-kyo, Rissho-kosei-kai in establishing its hospital has adopted the policy of employing only medical doctors. "Faith healers" do not practice in the hospitals; indeed, in an official pictorial survey of the sect's activities (published in 1954) the statement is made quite pointedly that the doctors are *not* members of the sect.

<sup>11</sup> The articles appeared in *The Japan Times* (May 23, June 20 and 21, 1957) and *The English Mainichi* (June 16 and 22, 1957).

## THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

of the sect to control all seats of both houses of the Diet within two decades. In campaigning for their candidates the devotees flaunt the election laws, insisting as they do so that faith is more important than law. Thus they employ intimidation and bribery with impunity, and when some of their number are arrested they accept their fate without concern, believing that imprisonment is nothing but a sacrifice necessary to the accomplishment of their goal.

Soka-Gakkai also is making a determined effort to win the loyalty of coal miners in Hokkaido, the northern-most island of Japan. The sect has set itself up in opposition to the miners' trade unions. Taking advantage of the insecure material and spiritual condition of the miners, Soka-Gakkai says to them that if they will only believe in the teachings of the sect they will become invulnerable to the dangers of their trade, and their wages will be raised without their having to resort to strikes. So enticing has this appeal been that the unions are seeking means by which, without violating the constitutional

guarantee of religious freedom, they can defend themselves against this encroachment.

Similar irresponsible tactics are being employed all over Japan in the evangelistic endeavors of the sect. In one town a "missionary" succeeded in converting secretly a number of school girls, who were led to believe that membership in the sect would improve their scholastic records. This maneuver came to light when a Soka-Gakkai worker called at the home of one of the girls and demanded of her parents that they destroy their family Buddhist altar.

In another town a group of fanatics called at the home of the pastor of the Holiness Church, roused him from bed, and demanded that he convert to Soka-Gakkai and become the leader of their local group. When he refused to comply, his visitors rushed into the church and laid it waste. Official inquiries into this incident led to the further discovery that in that area proselytizers often had solicited members through extortion and blackmail and had forced their way into homes to destroy family altars.

# RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE II

(A report of three Round Table Conferences)

Prepared by Yoshiro Tamura

## Introduction

The First Round Table Conference sponsored by the International Institute for the Study of Religions was held in April, 1957, at Kowaku-en, Hakone, with Dr. Hideo Kishimoto of Tokyo University as chairman. This conference was something of an experiment. As far as is known nothing quite like it had ever been attempted before in Japan. Ten potential religious leaders in their thirties, each of whom was actively affiliated with some sectarian branch of Buddhism, Christianity, Shinto, or some other religion met for a three-day retreat of four two-hour conferences covering three days to discuss the theme, "Religion and the Present Age." Then about two weeks after the conference the participants met in Tokyo to discuss their experience and report to the Institute. A full report of this conference was published under the title, "Religion and Modern Life," in English and Japanese in the Institute's Bulletin No. 5, 1958.

Altogether the experiment was so worthwhile that it was decided to make such conferences a regular activity of the Institute. This was made possible for a three-year period at least by a generous grant from Danforth Foundation. Subsequently, three such conferences have been held, the only change being an increase in the number of two-hour sessions from four to five.



## RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE II

The subjects discussed were : "Religion and Social Life," and "Religion and Modernization." Those acting as leaders were Dr. Tetsutarō Ariga and Assistant Professor Jikai Fujiyoshi of Kyoto University, Dr. Shōji Ishizu and Dr. Ichirō Hori of Tōhoku University, and Professor Fumio Masutani of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

The sectarian affiliation of the participants was as follows : thirteen Buddhists from the Jōdo (2), Jōdo Shin (4), Nichiren (1), Shingon (2), Tendai (1), and Zen (Rinzai) (2) sects and the Risshō Kōsei Kai (1); six Shintoists from Fusō-kyō, Misogi-kyō, and Shrine Shinto (4); eight Christians from the Catholic (2), Episcopal (2), and Lutheran (1) churches and the United Church of Christ in Japan (3); and five from Konkō-kyō (1), Seichō-No-Ie (1), Tenri-kyō (2), and World Messianity (1). (The relatively larger proportion of Christians was due to the desire to have two contrasting types in each conference.

The conferences are ends in themselves. They are primarily for the benefit of the participants. It is believed that the experience itself is of value to each one personally and that, as the result of increased mutual understanding, considerable influence will be exerted on the Japanese religious world of the future. This report of the conferences is secondary. In order to insure complete freedom of discussion, the individuals remain anonymous. Therefore, in presenting it only the symbols are given to indicate the general background of the speakers.

To insure accuracy in preparing reports and to provide source material for scholarly research, the two-hour discussion periods were tape-recorded, transcribed, edited, mimeographed in

Japanese, and submitted to the participants for approval. After being corrected and changed as requested, the Japanese report was published in the Institute's Japanese language *Kokusai Shukyo News*. This English report is based on a translation of the Japanese report. The names and other details regarding the participants will be given at the end of the report.

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Note: The designations used to identify the religious tradition of the participants are as follows: B—Buddhist, C—Christian, both Catholic and Protestant, S—Shinto sects (Fusō-kyō, Misogi-kyō), SS—Shrine Shinto, O—Others (Konkō-kyō, Seichō-No-Ie, Tenri-kyō, World Messianity)

## I SIGNIFICANCE OF MODERNIZATION

### **Rationalism, Individualism, Humanism**

**B** Modernization seems to me to mean scientific rationalism, the positive spirit, the idea of individual realization, and respect for humanity, which are the product of human reason.

**C** Humanism may be said to be one of the characteristics of the modern spirit.

**O** I think that the application of religion to daily living is a characteristic of modernization.

**Chairman** Secularization is one of the characteristics of modernization. For example, salvation has become an inner problem apart from the good offices of religious organizations and ethics has changed from the ethics mediated by religious organizations to secular ethics.

**C** I think that emerging from a closed society to an open society is also a feature of modernization. In other words, for a country it means that it does not exist in isolation but is open to the world.

**C** Doesn't modern rationalism mean that both gods and emperors, which have hitherto been regarded as authorities, have ceased to be so regarded?

**C** A certain Japanese literary critic says that there are six meanings for modernization : (1) democracy in the political field, (2) capitalism in the economic field, (3) the establishment and mechanization of factory production in the field

of industry, (4) compulsory education in the field of education, (5) the organization of a national army in the military field, and (6) the maturity of the individual and his emancipation from the community in the field of human consciousness.

I think that it is necessary to add another item to these six fields, that is, the field of art and religion. Modernization in this field, however, might be said in a sense to be unnecessary or impossible.

C As to the distinctive features of modernization in Europe, there seem to be three points: the separation of church and state, the realization of Effective rationalism, and individualism. In regard to the first, the separation of church and state indicates a shift from absolute monarchy to democracy. Regarding the second, rationalism itself existed in the Middle Ages and I think that Confucian ethics can be said to have had a very rational ethical system. However, I purposely capitalize Effective in the sense that modern rationalism is different from such rationalism. Effective rationalism means to criticize continuously and to overcome the aberrations of rationalism in the past. I think such a way of living is a feature of modern rationalism. As for the third, individualism means emancipation from the feudalistic system and the family system, and the consciousness that individuals are equal and free as human beings.

### **Social Consciousness and the Self-awakening of the Individual**

C I think that in ancient society the relationship among individuals was predominant. Even the peace problem was thought to be within the sphere of individual contact. In the



modern age, however, all relationships are between groups. In other words, I think that a social consciousness is one of the features of the modern spirit.

**SS** Both individualism and social consciousness have been mentioned as features of the modern spirit. Isn't this contradictory?

**C** Individual consciousness is based on the consciousness of society and, conversely, the latter is based on the former. Accordingly, there was no social consciousness but only a relationship among individuals in ancient times. This meant that there was no individual consciousness in its true sense; because where the individual is, there is society, and where society is, there is the individual. The fact that the modern age is an age of individual consciousness and also social consciousness does not seem to me to be contradictory.

### The Modern Age and Today

**C** I think that there is a time-lag between individualization and socialization. In other words, generally speaking, in contrast with the spirit of the modern age (*kindai*<sup>a</sup>) which was individualization, the spirit of today (*gendai*<sup>b</sup>) is in socialization. I think that today, socialization is coming to be criticized.

The Renaissance arose in Europe and individual consciousness appeared for the first time in the modern age, but in contrast with this it can be said that today, through socialization, mechanization, and mass communication, there has come into existence the "lost individual." Therefore,

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a. 近代 b. 現代

though it is called modernization, there are two stages in it that must be distinguished: the age of individual consciousness and the age of socialization or mass-communication. It may be more understandable to call the latter "contemporarization" (*gendai-ka<sup>a</sup>*) apart from modernization (*kindai-ka<sup>b</sup>*).

- B** I think that European modernization began with the realization of human reason or the awakening of the individual after destroying the authority of God in the Middle Ages, which was emphasized by Catholicism. In other words, human beings that are independent of God, that live according to their own reason instead of by God's command are regarded as moderns.

Now, because of the historic change which occurred about the 1840's resistance arose to the idea of human beings having this independent reason and today, a different idea of human beings has come into existence, that is, Marxism and existentialism.

- C** I think that it is difficult for us to distinguish clearly things of the Middle Ages from those of the modern age in the field of spiritual and cultural history. In regard to social conditions, that is, the lower level of the social structure, there can be seen a great change, and we cannot ignore the fact that this change on the lower level restricts the continuity of spiritual and cultural history.

- B** I think that modernization lies in the fact that the God-centric concept of the Middle Ages shifted to a man-centric concept.

- C** However, I am afraid that this will result in denying the

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*a.* 現代化 *b.* 近代化

point of the problem that we formally define the modern age as one that has changed from being God-centric to being man-centric.

## II MODERNIZATION AND RELIGION

*Views regarding the definition of modernization were varied and complicated. Consequently, an effort was made to separate modernization from "contemporal-ization." What are the views as to the role religions are playing or should play in such modernization?*

### The Current of the Times and Religion

SS Shinto values gentle and natural sentiment. This sentiment includes the ethics of the times. The etymology of the word *tsumi*<sup>a</sup> (sin) used in Shinto, for example, is *tsutsumu*,<sup>b</sup> literally, "to wrap in or envelope," which means to envelope each characteristic and time instead of developing them. This shows that Shinto attaches much importance to growth and development. This is the so-called growing prosperity (*iya-saka*<sup>c</sup>). Accordingly Shinto is not opposed to modernization.

B Introspection in Buddhism does not break off the connection with the times and society, for the interdependence between existence and consciousness is a fundamental principle of Buddhism. In Buddhism, personal consciousness is the consciousness of the time and society. I think that the concern in and response to actual society becomes the

a. 罪 b. 包む c. 弥栄

*Nembutsu*<sup>a</sup> (invocation of the Amida's name) in personal introspection, and this invocation becomes the principle of practice in actual life.

**C** In regard to Christianity, I think that the content of the gospel does not ever change, but that the approach to the times differs with the times. "With the times," however, does not mean to follow after the times. For "the times" is transitory and short-lived. However, we are beings who must live in the times. Therefore, despite the fact that life is transitory and short, we are coping with it to the best of our ability. In other words, we are standing on both the eternal gospel and the manifestation of the gospel in history, that is, in the actual world.

**B** Religious leaders often stress that religion is an eternal and universal thing applicable to any time and, from the fact that it applies to any time, draw the inference that religion is living at each time. I think, however, that such a way of looking at things from the point of view of eternity and universality makes religion reactionary to the times, rather than alive with the times. I think that we should sink ourselves into the depth of the times by effacing ourselves, instead of looking down at it from the point of view of eternity and universality. This requires, first of all, use of the most strict analysis by means of social science.

As to the current of the times and religion, we should think much of the complicated contradiction between religion's pursuit of things which transcend the times—eternity, purification, etc.,—and its adaptation to the times.

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a. 念仏



locality, or folk lore. The history of Buddhism has been developing sometimes in confrontation with secularism and sometimes in adaptation to it. It can be said that those whom we call the founders stood at the peak of such a contradiction.

### **Social Consciousness of the Modern Age and the Personal Ethics of Religion**

**C** Social consciousness has been mentioned as one of the features of the modern spirit. Regarding this, it may be said that the religions of the past were based upon individual salvation and are playing a reactionary role in respect to the modern age. I think that religious leaders should re-examine this point of view.

**B** In regard to the religious education of the past, it seems to be a fact that religion is nothing but individual ethics, which has built up the men who adapt themselves to actual society and not those who protest against it. This is the point which is criticized by the so-called modern progressives.

**O** Religion centers in individuals. However, it can be said that any religion which has some insight into human beings does not deal only with the abstract individual. On the ground of understanding human beings, there should be the idea of communication between human beings, that is, sociality. In our true human life we cannot ignore the fact that we are brothers and sisters who have the same parents. So, if we have a deep religious consciousness in this sense, we naturally come to have a social consciousness.

**O** Indeed, I think that religious leaders should promote the

development of a social consciousness and positively wrestle with social problems. It is doubtful, however, if it is possible in connection with social problems to draw a direct answer from religion itself. It is sometimes observed that in the same denomination there are two opposing points of view concerning social or political problems. I wonder whether or not it is necessary to unify these views. Anyhow, in regard to only social problems, religion's role in modernization does not seem to be a simple matter.

**B** As Buddhism stresses dependent origination (*engi<sup>a</sup>*) and emptiness (*kū<sup>b</sup>*), it takes things dynamically instead of statically, relatively instead of in isolation. Therefore, I think that the fundamental standpoint of Buddhism, so far as it acts religiously, should not be one of conservative reaction. I think, however, that when a tradition has come into existence something conservative must arise from it, —sometimes from the standpoint of the defense of a religion.

**Chairman** I don't think that a conservative nature is necessarily bound up with tradition. I think that when an idea arises that religious organizations and society in general are to be distinguished through systematizing the idea of unworldliness (the priests) and worldliness (the laymen), religion is isolated and this results in conservativeness or anachronism.

**SS** There must be something traditional or isolated at the basis of the universal world. The latter is maintained by the former. We should recognize that we cannot deny such a basis.

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a. 緣起 b. 空

## Modernization and Christianity

- B** What comes mostly into question is the way in which Christianity, which sets up a transcendental and only God, copes with the modern, rationalistic tendency centering in human reason.
- C** On the contrary, modernization and Christianity have a common basis. In a word, it is democracy. It can be said that democracy, a special character of modernization, has been founded upon Christianity.
- C** As to what has fostered Western rationalism, we must admit that Christianity has contributed much to it.
- C** Protestantism established a new relationship between God and man, which destroyed the feudalistic social system of the Middle Ages and gave the basis for the formation of modern capitalism. The idea of the relationship between God and man was presented by Luther and Calvin. Luther regarded human society as under the grace of God and thought it would go to destruction if left without the guidance of God's grace. Calvin regarded it as predetermined by God. These views define the work of human society as obedience to God's will and devotion to God's authority. At the same time, however, it seems that we operate human society rationally and with all our might so as to be in accord with God's predetermination. The positive affirmation of the actual world begins at this point. In other words, it is recognized that in the face of God the full demonstration of each given rational faculty and ability, each improvement in scientific techniques, each increase in proper-

ties, and so forth are consistent with God's will.

**C** I think that Protestantism has increased the tendency toward modern secularization. Protestantism teaches that man should wrestle seriously with all worldly things as the gifts of God, who set man in the midst of them and with full responsibility for them. This means that, instead of God working directly in this world, God entrusted man with this world in order to make him treat it in a responsible manner without shame before God. This also means that it is possible for man to do everything on his own responsibility. In this sense it can be said that secularization is promoted. Needless to say, this does not mean to make man himself absolute, but to make him aware of his responsible existence.

**C** I think that there are two types of Christianity. One is a doctrine-centered denominationalism, the other is an institution-centered church-type. The former might be said to be connected with the laborer of the new economic class, and to play a big role in modernization, while the latter is connected with the upper rather than the middle class, and plays the role of rather restraining modernization. However, the meaning of restraining in a better sense may be that of opposing the idea of human absoluteness into which modernization is apt to fall.

**C** Protestantism is entering positively into the scientific natural world and history. This means, however, to carry through neither a religious-historical view nor a scientific one.

**SS** Is there any historical view in religion? I wonder if no



positive answer to history comes from religion.

- O** I think that science and religion should cooperate with each other. For the value of neither the laws which science has formulated nor their application can be known only by science. Value judgements depend on human ethics, and it is religion that gives a foundation to ethics.

### **Modernization and Authoritarian Faith**

- C** Setting up God as the absolute authority in Christianity means to recognize no authority other than God, to deny all earthly authorities, and to show that all things are equal.

In Buddhism, for example, such a God does not exist, so I think it is apt to compromise with worldly authorities. In regard to denominations, the founders and the priesthood are raised reverently above the followers and this may cause a feudalistic and reactionary tendency to develop.

- B** I think that in Buddhism also there is such an idea; that is, the Buddha and the Law are authoritative and all other things are equal before them. It is clear in Buddha's words, "Depend on the Law, not on man," that Buddhism denies earthly authorities.

- C** Christianity stresses the world transcending rationality, or the ultimate authoritative world of God which transcends our reason. This emphasis, in fact, is leading to the rationalization and equalization of all earthly things. Therefore, from the Christian viewpoint, it may be said that if religion does not set up such a God, it then becomes a compromising religion which seeks something irrational and mysterious from the earthly and sensual world. It becomes superstition

and obeys worldly power.

**B** Buddhism from the first has denied all authority whatsoever. Therefore, it goes without saying that it recognizes neither earthly nor heavenly authority. However, as already stated, it is a fact that in the development of Buddhism, having no heavenly authority has caused difficulty in putting forth something to oppose earthly authority and consequently Buddhism has submitted to it. Therefore, in order to oppose earthly authorities, some Buddhist reformers lifted aloft Buddha and the Law, while others stressed the invocation of the Buddha Amida and denied the validity of charms and prayers which sought after mysteries among sensual things. This is, however, strictly an expedient. It is a fundamental standpoint of Buddhism to deny any kind of authority whether it be heavenly or earthly.

However, from the general standpoint of Buddhism, the denial of authority is not directly insisted upon; but it appears as one side of the transcendency of human nature, that is, as deliverance from attachment. Buddhism directly insists on release from attachments, because it is the only and the fundamental way to avoid being captured by any constantly recurring authority.

**Chairman** In Zen Buddhism, there is such a dangerous saying as "When you meet a Buddha, kill him."\* This means that all authorities or idols, even a Buddha, should be denied. This spirit seems to pervade all Buddhism, not only Zen. Therefore, the Almighty God is also denied by Buddhism.

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\* Rinzai-roku (臨濟錄)

In actuality, however, man is inclined to depend upon something authoritative. This is, from the viewpoint of Buddhism, an illusion which should be broken, but it is very difficult for a weak man to do so. For this reason, earthly authorities have arisen and Buddhism has also become connected with them.

**B** The saying, "When you meet a Buddha, kill him," figuratively speaking, means in regard to gold dust, for example, that it is as precious as gold, but as injurious as dust because, when it enters the eye, it causes the loss of eyesight. It does not simply mean a denial of authority. In other words, it means that we should respect the sacred as the sacred, but should not become attached to it.

**SS** Shinto, instead of denying authority, takes the position of regarding all objects as alive. We revere all things for the reason that life has value.

**S** Shinto seeks absolute authority in the kami, but the relationship between the kami and man is like that between the bodily parent and child. Therefore, we feel a close familiarity with the kami, as well as awe and respect. However, the relationship between parent and child is not the same as seen in a hen laying an egg. It is produced through the activity of the kami, who rule all beings and non-beings, that is, the interchange between the mind of the kami and life. It does not simply mean the bodily and blood relationship between parent and child, but a formless and super-sensitive relationship.

**C** On hearing what Buddhists and Shintoists say, we Christians feel that something optimistic pervades the universe.

It makes us feel that something both heavenly and earthly are combined in the solution. It is said that Buddhism denies even heavenly authority, but in Christianity, God is the absolute authority which man cannot deny. Denial of this would endanger human existence itself. For example, it is quite impossible for a man to live alone without God in a desert such as that in which the Hebrews lived. It would mean eternal extinction. In the Orient, however, it is felt that one can live alone.

**B** Pure Land Buddhism stresses the fear of loneliness by the expression *gijō taigū*<sup>a</sup> ("the castle of doubt, the womb palace where a sceptic is born"), and teaches that it is the effect of sin to doubt the original vow of the Buddha Amida. However, it may differ from Christianity at this point.

**C** In regard to the denial of authority, Buddhism may be said to be more modernized and suitable to the modern age than Christianity, but Buddhism, remaining in deliverance from authority, has not produced an active resistance to it, so that it seems some times to have resulted in a blind obedience to worldly authorities and by becoming connected with them has compromised with things feudalistic, become reactionary, and fallen into things non-modern in form.

I think that in the Occident there are two kinds of modernization, that is, a right modernization and a wrong modernization. The former denies earthly, class authority by establishing God's authority, and therein all authorities are absorbed. From this point of view, in the spiritual history of man, modernization has been a continuous process from

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a. 疑城胎宮



the Middle Ages to the modern.

I think that this characteristic feature of Christianity has succeeded for a long time in leading toward the right kind of modernization. This means that no irrationality or authority is applied to the things of the lower level, that is, the social structure, or the recognizable things of this world but treats them strictly rationally and equally, and emphasizes God's authority in order to do this. This is the right kind of modernization. This modernization in the West in a right sense can be said even to establish religious authority. On the contrary, the wrong modernization can be said to be one which has fallen into pre-modernization by denying religious authority and conversally by recognizing authority on a worldly level.

**C** Is there any idea of tension between things heavenly and things worldly in Buddhism?

**Chairman** The status of nirvana in Buddhism shows that there is no such stress, doesn't it?

### III Modernization of Religion

*In the course of the discussion about the modernization of religion, there were criticisms of modernization in general. However, before discussing them, let us consider various views regarding modernization of religion.*

Should religion also be modernized? If so, in what field should it take place? Is it necessary that it be done in the way in which it is being done?

**Necessity for Modernization**

**C** We Christians are making an effort to propagate Christianity in its true sense. We are constantly confronting modern society and introducing modern developments instead of living safely in the old, primitive form of the faith. If religion does not wipe out the premodern elements, but continues to be dependent upon them, it is natural for it to be criticized as an opiate and backward.

**B** As far as Zen Buddhism is concerned, before the question of modernization or non-modernization is raised, the problem of how we should experience the true tradition is looming large. Zen is first of all a religion of experience. In this case, is modernization unnecessary? No. On the contrary, it is very necessary. I know some Zen priests who say that "because the head temple was established and has been protected by the Imperial Household, we are thoroughly pro-Emperor;" or that "it was all right in the pre-war days, because we had a criterion called the Imperial Rescript on Education, but education today is very confusing." They are, indeed, respectable persons as far as succession and the maintenance of tradition are concerned. However, we must see through to the fact that when they live and work in the present day, they are apt to become utterly nonsensical.

**B** I think that the modernization of religion does not mean to analyze objectively something mysterious and to take off the mystic veil, but to devise ways to make moderns understand the mysteries.

**C** I think religion continues to be revitalized by means of

contact with Buddha or Christ. Many religions, however, are conservative and are trying to keep things as they were in the past.

### **Points to be Modernized : Doctrine, Rites, Religious Organization, Socialization**

**B** The fixation of religious organizations is always connected with and reliant upon worldly authorities. They have become quite different from what they should be, especially in respect to their distance from the populace. Although doctrinal study, the backbone of propaganda, should be the discovery of the answers to the religious questions of the time, it is in fact devoted to the absorption of classical knowledge and separate from the people of the time. I think that the following things may be enumerated as indicating the modernization of religion: the translation of the sacred scriptures into modern languages, the modern expression of doctrines, and the establishment of new doctrinal studies. I hope these things will make modern people understand the doctrines, and become the basis of modernization.

**SS** I think that as far as religions in general are concerned, the universal and essential element of religion is constant and that modernization is not conceivable. However, the way to express religious faith so as to appeal to the times should be studied. Herein may lie the problem of modernization.

**B** Jōdo Shin Buddhism has degenerated to the study of exegesis and the preparation of commentaries on the sutras.

At the beginning of the Meiji era, Manshi Kiyozawa,<sup>a</sup> was confronted with the tendency of modern rationalism and instilled a modern breath into the Shin faith, which was just then going to ruin, and testified by himself to human salvation in the modern society through Shin Buddhism. I think that there is no modernization of religion other than that man himself, living in a constantly transient society, actively accepts doctrines in a manner appropriate to his time and ability.

**C** I think we should consider the distinction between the essential quality of religion and its expression. The latter is under the limitation of the times, so that it can be modernized. Religious leaders, however, are sometimes tempted to hold the idea that religion's essential quality transcends time and to deny even the modernization of its expression. I think that this causes religion to be left behind society and to check modernization. If religion were shut up within the framework of time and lost its universal quality, it would be unable to play the role of criticizing human existence. In this case a return to its original teachings would be a modernization of religion.

**B** Something like the words in the written oracles of Tenri-kyō would already have ceased to be accessible to the people in the present time. Such words seem to have become classics already. In this sense, the expression of doctrine should always change with the times.

**Chairman** In order to be understood by the people of each age, it is necessary for a doctrine to be expressed in the words

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<sup>a</sup>. 清沢満之



of the times. The old words, however, might be useful in giving solemnity to ceremonies.

**C** Is there not a nostalgia for things old in Japanese culture? For that reason many old things seem to remain.

**Chairman** It is sometimes said that the more difficult they are to understand, the more valuable a sutra is when a Buddhist priest chants it.

**B** I think that there is a color of magic in faith.

**O** Tenri-kyō has what it calls *saimon*<sup>a</sup> (a written address to the deity), which is so written in the spoken language that believers may understand it when they hear it read. In the case of weddings and other ceremonies, however, the ceremonial prayers of Shrine Shinto, the *norito*,<sup>b</sup> are definitely more impressive.

**B** How popular is the colloquial translation of the Bible?

**C** I don't know very much about it, because it was so recently published. Some people say that it is very clear and good, while others say that the feeling of solemnity and sanctity has diminished.

**B** I think that when we talk about the modernization of religion, usually we think of the memorial services and other ceremonies, or the ways of expressing doctrine. How about the contents of the doctrines? For example, is a founder's teaching absolute and beyond the times? Does denial of this absoluteness mean denial of the faith itself? Or, is it all right to deny its absoluteness?

**B** Religion necessarily includes the sentiment of devotion; that is, religion is effected between teaching and those who

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a. 祭文 b. 祝詞

have devotion to and a comprehension of it. The teaching should be unchangeable. In Jōdo Shin the teaching is: "If we believe in the Original Vow and invoke Amida's<sup>a</sup> name, we will become buddhas."

The study of doctrine is to clarify this point of the teaching. Study includes the comprehension of those who have searched for the truth in the midst of the times and circumstances, in order that it attain a character suitable to the times. In other words, we are not devoted to a fixed concept of the founder's religious experience, but listen to his teaching through the problems of the modern age.

**B** Buddhism has adaptability. In Buddhism the doctrine is not an historic one-time fact, and neither are the words. They are not fixed. From the view point of the Shingon Sect, the various phenomena of the time and society are all a manifestation of *Mahā-vairocana's*<sup>b</sup> Law Body (*Hosshin*<sup>c</sup>) and his preaching.

**B** Buddhism is based on the Law (*dharma*) and the teaching (*sāsana*).<sup>\*</sup> The Law is the constant truth which does not change eternally. The teaching is the manifestation of the Law in accordance with the times. Accordingly, the teaching should be modernized.

**C** If the concepts of the Law and the teaching were applied to Christianity, the mythical expression may be equated to the Law. In my opinion, the Law should be made alive in each age in the form of the teaching. In other words, the myths of the Bible are to be accepted as the Law as they

\* Skt. in Japanese 教

a. 阿弥陀 b. 大日如来 c. 法身

## RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE II

are, even in the present age; but the teaching is to be developed in accordance with the times. There is a view that the Bible has no error. I think the problem lies in whether or not the Bible is made effective in the times as teachings rather than in the discussing whether or not the Bible has any error.

**B** I think that the Law is indescribable and that when it is expressed it always becomes teachings. Therefore, I think that myths are also teachings. Moreover, they seem to be of such a nature that in the present time they should be abandoned first of all.

**C** Recently there has occurred a dispute about de-mythologization. Mythology denotes the indescribability and eternity of the Law, so I think it is wrong to abandon mythology because it is thought to be not suitable to modern times. I think that teachings are to be derived from it to meet each age.

**O** It is necessary for the study of faith to interpret and understand a founder's direct teaching from the sense of the times, but this is a problem beyond modernization. The sense of the times is different from the special sense of modernization. If we make the teachings suitable to the times from the standpoint of modernization, it would be dangerous, because we would then lose the soul of faith or would sometimes pervert it so as to flatter the times.

**B** I think that the doctrines which have hitherto been traditional in the course of history, should also be modernized in some form or other at the present time. Some religious organizations may think it impossible, but in Buddhism at

least it can be said that when one is a human being in the true meaning of transcending the doctrine, the organization, or the frame of Buddhism, he is for the first time a true Buddhist. I think that it is important today to create an image of a complete religious man without adherence to Buddhist doctrine or dogma. What has to be thought of here is that in a new age there is also a new image of a religious man coping with it.

**SS** Shrine Shinto has no fixed doctrine.

**C** Churches, temples, and denominations necessarily belong to religion. The modernization of religion is connected with the modernization of denominations. In this sense, I think that it is necessary to analyze the state of denominations. In the present, despite the fact that preaching is very progressive, the actual denominational system remains feudalistic and conservative. For this reason the criticism of outsiders is often heard.

**O** I think that the modernization of religion lies in emancipation from magic and transcending it.

**B** We should pay attention to the fact that seven hundred years ago, Shinran<sup>a</sup> rejected shamanism, denied divination and prayer, and maintained a view of equality which ignored the distinctions of rank and sex and had the spirit of democracy of not being afraid of authority. This shows that Shinran had firm confidence through the wisdom of Buddhism, rather than a rational character suitable to the modern age. I want to give weight to the point that he had a firm support for his life, and felt no need of prayer or miracles.

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<sup>a</sup>. 親鸞

- B** What is most often criticized as an aspect of the pre-modern in Japanese Buddhism is the supporter (*danka*<sup>a</sup>) system. In this system it is considered that when an ancestor belonged to a certain specific temple, unless there is some special reason, his descendants have to be believers of the same temple even though at present its spiritual and social outlook has become weakened. Now doesn't child baptism in Christianity run counter to the modern spirit?
- C** Child baptism means that what is believed by the parents to be the best is given to their children on the parents' responsibility. Baptism is different in essence from initiation. From the standpoint of Christian faith, baptism means that a mark is put on the soul by the grace of God. Baptism is not related to rights and duties, but is the gift of God. As to the religious education of children, there may be a method that is sometimes suitable and sometimes unsuitable to the modern spirit.
- C** In the case of child baptism, god-parents are named. The idea of god-parents signifies a guaranty of responsibility to lead a child into a religious life. When a child becomes old enough and has sufficient self-consciousness, he receives confirmation anew as an expression of his own faith.
- C** The socialization of religion may be mentioned as one type of modernization of religion. This means that religious leaders become conscious of society and the state. The anachronism and pre-modernity of religions lie in the fact that they are only trying to bring the past salvation idea, which is based upon the individual salvation idea, directly

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a. 檀家



into the present time.

**C** Some religious leaders insist that as religion aims primarily at the universal salvation of man, that is, the individual, transcending society or the state, it should not touch society or the state. It is feared, however, that in this case it would assume the attitude of an onlooker to the movement of society or the state, with the result that it would be drawn into power and compromise with it.

**C** From the viewpoint of Christianity, it can be said that the more one becomes a religious leader in its true meaning, the more he goes out to society for the purpose of realizing a better society. I think that religious ethics is the ethics for the minority. The minority means the few who serve the masses, the creative minority, so to speak. When they serve the masses, they cannot but consider the social structure.

**O** Religion should consider social evils very thoroughly. Therefore, it should be very much interested in politics. I think that this is one of the ways of modernizing religion.

**C** The socialization of religion does not mean the extension of the religious domain in society, but to look at man as a personality in a responsible society that is, as a *person* and not as a mere man. This means to look at him in a state in which he has the responsibility of questioning and answering you and me. I think that in the modern age man through the discovery of the ego became very much individualized; but today the significance of religion lies in the realization of a man as a person.

**B** In Buddhism Nichiren<sup>a</sup> is mentioned as a person who paid

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a. 日蓮

attention to society and the state. He took not only the spiritual peace and enlightenment of the individual but also social salvation seriously. He started a movement called "The Establishment of Righteousness and the Security of the State (*Risshō Ankoku*<sup>a</sup>).

- O** I think that in contrast with this, religion should reduce groups to individuals and attach importance to them.
- B** As for the modernization of religion, isn't it possible to say that it means, on the contrary, to lift the individual out from society? Now, in contrast with the strong emphasis on the individual consciousness in the Christian position or in the Western world, the identity of oneself and another is stressed in Buddhism or in the Eastern world. Therefore, in the latter case, the consciousness of the individual seems to be rather weak. Consequently, Buddhists seem to turn their eyes on the individual, while Christians turn their eyes on society.
- C** We cannot say that the idea of the identity of oneself and another in Buddhism is rooted in the group or social consciousness. I think that it is nothing but an abstract idea which is neither the social consciousness nor individual consciousness. There is the establishment of individuality and the self-awakening of the personality in Christianity and, therefore, it can be said to be rich in social consciousness,  
(to be continued)

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a. 立正安国

# REVIEWS

## Zen for the West

By Sohaku Ogata

New York; The Dial Press, 1959

182 pp. \$3.50



"Zen for the West" by Sohaku Ogata is a timely publication. After a rapid reading I found, on the one hand, the following favorable points:

1. The characteristics of Zen are certainly presented in a way that will satisfy to some extent the intellectual hunger of foreign readers.
2. It can be recognized as a good introduction of Zen to the West.
3. In view of the fact that few people can talk in English on Zen and translate Zen scriptures into English, this book is relatively successful. The exposition of Zen terms is not bad.

On the other hand, I found the following defects:

1. The origin of Zen is not satisfactorily explained.
2. The account of Zen's historical development is too short.

3. The philosophical background is lacking.

The author has followed the age-old tradition of Japanese writers who avoid theoretical discourses. If the author had tried to speak on contemporary Zen, he would have had to refer to the theoretical basis of Zen.

4. The author has gone beyond the limits in giving his book the title of "Zen," because he does not cover the whole area of Zen. He has omitted Soto Zen, the largest Zen group in Japan. He puts too much effort in the clarification of the scripture of the Zen to which he happens to belong.

5. A guide book for occidentals needs a more thorough understanding of Western ideas and thought.

6. The style may be welcomed by the "Beat" generation. This book is a pearl for them. But the

## REVIEWS

abuse of Zen by such a group must be avoided.

7. The Chinese characters on the cover, 禪那 were used in the past to denote *Jhana*. But this transcription has been proved to be wrong. It is a rule to drop the final vowel in a Chinese transcription; so *jhana* must be *jhan*,

that is 禪 (*Zen*). Accordingly 禪那 means *jhanana*, which is ridiculous. The fact that the author printed the age-long mistake on the cover shows not only his indifference to contemporary study, but also a lack of academic discipline.

Reiho Masunaga

Komazawa University, Tokyo

### The Kami Way : An Introduction to Shrine Shinto

By Dr. Sokyō Ono

*in collaboration with William P. Woodard*

Tokyo, International Institute for the Study of Religions,  
1960, 116pp. (not for public sale)

("The Kami Way" will be published this fall by  
Charles E. Tuttle Co.)

"The Kami Way" although a book of scarcely 120 pages, manages to compress into pocket size a comprehensive and authentic survey of Shinto, the ancestral, indigenous faith of the Japanese people.

Dr. Sokyō Ono, the author is widely known as a professor in Kokugakuin Daigaku, the only national Shinto university in Japan. In addition to his academic competency he is extensively active as a lecturer for the Association of Shinto Shrines in the training

of priests for their practical work.

In the five chapters, the major aspects of Shinto are very adequately covered. The character of this faith in history, its functions of worship, its relation to modern society, to the Emperor and to the State, its interaction with the other religious systems, and its basic teachings and view of life, —all these and more will be found treated with accuracy and with a genuine depth of interpretation.

The author, in staking out his

## REVIEWS

claim for the place of Shinto in Japan's multi-faith world, unquestionably encloses far more ground than is ordinarily accorded it, particularly among the foreign scholars upon whom Westerners have almost exclusively depended for their outlook. This furnishes another illustration of the expansion of an ancient religious tradition to match the enlarging challenge of today's world upon all religions. All the traditional faiths in the world are being stretched to new dimensions in the minds and dedicated spirits of many of their adherents. While condemning Japanese militarism of the past decades Professor Ono boldly seizes the very Shinto formulas then used as the slogans of a resurgent nationalism, and reinterprets them into constructively peaceful and universal meanings.

Who is to deny him this right?

Not for many years, —not since the creative work of Dr. Genchi Kato — has the English-reading public been given so reliable and authoritative a treatment of Shinto "from the inside" as this; and yet in such brief, readable form. For the success of the undertaking much credit is due William P. Woodard, Director of the International Institute for the Study of Religions. His tireless research, his exacting demands of accuracy, and his wide acquaintance with leaders of all faiths in Japan is now bearing fruit in an increasing harvest of invaluable published materials, of which "*The Kami Way*" is a conspicuous example. We are all in his debt.

Charles Iglehart

Tokyo



## REVIEWS

### Living Japan

By Donald Keene

London, William Heinmann Ltd., 1959, 50s

Among the numerous books on Japan that have appeared in recent years for the general reader none has been more attractively presented than *Living Japan: the Land, the People and their Changing World*, by Dr. Donald Keene, associate professor of Japanese at Columbia University, New York City. Rarely has a finer combination of good literature, excellent content, and superb photography appeared.

In spite of his relatively short residence in this country, Dr. Keene has succeeded in a remarkable manner in weaving together all the important phases of everyday life of "living Japan" and in making the inner as well as the outer life of the people real to those whose acquaintance with the country is limited. Although the author's professional field is Japanese literature, he is clearly a keen observer of people and customs. Even in the difficult field of reli-

gion he does remarkably well.

To expect complete technical accuracy in such a volume, however, would be asking too much. It is not that kind of a book. The readers will be primarily interested in general impressions and an understanding of the overall situation. This they will get. For the scholar or the person interested in more than this, the section on the religions must be read with great care. There are a number of minor errors, and some mistaken impressions will be created but this should be no surprise in view of the many errors that creep into the writings of even professional scholars in this field. For these errors the author of course must be responsible; but one cannot help but wonder if the specialists on whom the author must have relied for checking his manuscript were as careful as they should have been. Here are a few statements concerning which this reviewer has doubts:

## REVIEWS

(1) "Buddhist priests are clothed in black." (p. 82) Did he never see the gorgeous robes worn by the priests when performing temple ceremonies?

(2) "The Shinto priesthood has become an hereditary profession. It is almost unthinkable that a young man born outside the profession would wish to become a priest because of piety." (p. 92) The validity of any generalizations as to the motives for becoming a shrine priest is open to question; but the fact is that there are many young priests that were not born in priestly families.

(3) "The expenses for erecting the new shrines (at Ise) were met by popular subscription instead of by state grant." (p. 90) This is only partly true. Actually, the timbers for the last rebuilding of the shrines had already been cut and placed in the lumber yards at state expense before hostilities ended in 1945. This greatly reduced the amount of money that had to be raised from the public in order to rebuild the shrines.

(4) It is hardly fair to many modern religious movements to make such a sweeping statement as: "Innumerable small, less reputable Shinto sects have sprung up during the past half-century, especially since 1945." Moreover, there is no reference to new sects of Buddhist origin. (p. 95)

(5) Concerning Buddhism, the author says that Pure Land Buddhism has won "the allegiance of the vast majority of Japanese" p. 97 The total number of such believers is reported to be approximately 20 million out of a total of about 45 million.

(6) There are a number of other things that might be mentioned, but let us close with the statement that "most of the Japanese enthusiasm for the Imperial Family is concentrated in the person of of the Crown Prince." It can't be disproved but it seems very doubtful that this is correct?

In spite of these and other technical errors, the book is an excellent introduction to "Living Japan." (W.P.W.)

## REVIEWS

### **The World's Living Religions**

*By Robert E. Hume*

*New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959 Completely revised. 335pp. \$3.50*

Former students and friends of the late Dr. Robert E. Hume will welcome the "completely revised" edition of "The World's Living Religions," and those who have lost their copy of an earlier edition will be glad to have the new volume. However, as the preface to the new edition clearly indicates, this is anything but a complete revision and, if the material related to religions in Japan is any criterion, there was no good reason for re-publication.

In reference to new postwar religious movements in this country, we read that over 700 "new religious and sect" were "registered in the department of government which has to do with the religions," and that "some 600 of these arose during or immediately after the Second World War." The facts regarding these postwar religious movements were presented on page 70, Vol. I, No. 2 of *Contemporary*

*Religions in Japan*, so this need not detain us here.

On page 174 in discussing the emergence of Sectarian Shinto, so-called, it is implied that Christianity was recognized by the government before these sects were recognized as independent bodies; but Christianity was not officially recognized by the national government until the enactment of the Religious Organizations Law of 1939! The ordinance providing for police supervision of Christian churches (Home Ministry Ordinance No. 41, July 27, 1899) was promulgated fifteen years after the ordinance (Council of State Ordinance No. 19, August 11, 1884) which set up "Sectarian Shinto" and had nothing to do with its emergence.

Although it states on p. 81 that Buddhism in Japan and China has "won its largest and most active group of followers" and that in these countries "its doctrines have

been most changed from their original form," Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, that is, Mahayana Buddhism, receives such scant attention as to be of little or no value.

Concerning Shinto, an entire chapter of twenty-four pages is devoted to it, but so much of the information is out-dated and the additions and revisions are so inadequate that, as far as understanding Shinto in Japan today is concerned, it would have been better if the book had not been re-published. For example, pages 154—156 are devoted to the "sacred" scriptures of Shinto, but the word "sacred" is definitely not appropriate in connection with the *Kojiki* or the *Nihon Shoki*, and the *Manyōshū* has never been regarded as a scripture of the Shinto faith. These are classics and valuable sources for Shinto, but they are not considered "sacred" in any sense that the word is generally used.

On page 162, where reference is made to the custom of having an Imperial princess as high priestess

of the Grand Shrine of Ise, the author says that the custom "has been maintained throughout a period longer than the entire history of Christianity." However, even if we accept the pre-war official chronology, (the legendary date for the establishment of Ise was 5 B.C.) there were several periods—one lasting more than a century—when the custom was not observed. In the Meiji era the Japanese term for the office was changed and an Imperial prince was appointed. Then finally in 1946, after the disestablishment of Shrine Shinto, because all the Imperial princes had been purged as military officers, the former Princess Kitashirakawa was appointed. (Actually the purge did not apply to religious organizations and functionaries, but in many cases the institutions involved refrained from appointing purges to prominent positions.) Consequently, and in view of the fact that the present high priestess is a widow and not, as in ancient times, a virgin princess, it can hardly be said that custom as now observed is of any great antiquity.

## QUESTIONS and PROBLEMS



### **What is the legal status of religious organizations ?**

The legal status of religious organization, that is, churches, temples, shrines, their over-all denominations, and similar organizations, is about the same as in the United States, for example. People are free to meet, organize, and perform religious rites without reporting to or being concerned with the police or any government agency.

Religious organizations in Japan are not required to register with the government and do not receive "recognition" from any government agency.

Article 20 Paragraph 1 of the Constitution states that "Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all," and this provision is fully observed.

Article I Paragraph 2 of the Religious Juridical Persons Law reiterates the constitutional guarantee when it says :

Freedom of faith guaranteed in the Constitution must be respected in all phases of government. Therefore, no provision in this Law shall be construed as restricting any individual, group, or organization from disseminating teachings, observing ceremonies and functions, and conducting other religious acts on the basis of said guarantee.

Nevertheless, many writers, both Japanese and foreign, frequently state that so many religions "have been duly registered" or "officially registered" with the government, or that they exist "with government approval." Thus, the impression is created that separa-



## QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

tion of "church" and state in Japan is not complete and that religious organizations are still in some way subject to government supervision. This is incorrect. In the United State and elsewhere, it is not customary to say that denominations, churches, and synagogues are "recognized" by the government or that they exist "with the approval of the government" simply because they are incorporated; and it is incorrect to say so in regard to Japanese religious bodies.

How has this misunderstanding arisen? Why are such statements made by responsible persons that ought to know better? The answer to these questions is relatively simple. The writers inadvertently confuse religious organizations as such, with religious organizations as legally incorporated bodies.

Religious organizations (denominations, sects, churches, shrines, temples, and similar organizations) that desire to hold property and function as legal persons, of course, must become incorporated; but *they are not obliged to incorporate*. To incorporate an applicant, that is, a religious organization, must be qualified under the Religious Juridical Persons Law, its regulations pertaining to incorporation must be authenticated, and, to complete the incorporation procedures, the fact of incorporation must be registered. Hence, it is mistakenly said that religions must register and be recognized. But "authentication" (*ninshō<sup>a</sup>*) applies *only to the regulations for incorporation and not to the religious regulations of an organization*. Incorporation is solely "in order to facilitate.....owning establishments of worship and other properties, maintaining and operating them, and also carrying on business affairs....."

Incorporation by the government, of course, constitutes recognition of the fact that a given religious organization exists, but this is quite different from implying recognition (*ninka<sup>b</sup>* or *kyoka<sup>c</sup>*) in the pre-war sense of official permission to function as a religious body.

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a. 認証 b. 認可 c. 許可

## QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

Just as the incorporation of a business firm constitutes permission to engage in business without in any sense constituting approval of its business, so incorporation as a religious juridical person constitutes permission for a religious organization to hold property, maintain it, and carry on related business affairs without the slightest implication that such a religious organization itself is "recognized" or "approved."

Registration concerns the property held, the manner in which this property is administered, and the names of the officers that manage it. The last named may or may not be religious functionaries.

Thus, it is clear that that *religious organizations do not have to register with and are not "officially recognized" by the government.*

Probably in few, if any, countries of the world is religious freedom as fully respected as it is in Japan today.

### **Is Sectarian Shinto a religion?**

A highly respected Japanese scholar, writing in a recently published English language booklet states that "Sect Shinto is the name given to our native religion officially recognized by the Japanese Government," that "Sect Shinto" gradually became "an independent sect, and in several places he uses the expression "this sect" in reference to Sect Shinto. In one place he even says it was "a special sect under the special sanction of the Emperor." This particular article is filled with many similar errors, one of which is to also call pre-war Shrine Shinto "a sect"!

What is incorrect in these statements?

In the first place, it is incorrect to refer to "Sect Shinto" or

"Sectarian Shinto" (*Kyōha Shintō*)<sup>a</sup> as if it were a single religion in the sense that Buddhism and Christianity are religions. Sectarian Shinto was an administrative category created by the Meiji government in 1882. Prior to that there were just two religious categories, Buddhism and Shinto, including shrines, both of which were under one official (*jisha bugyō*)<sup>b</sup> of the Tokugawa government.

In connection with the separation of "church" and state and the nationalization of shrines, in order to create a state cult, the government placed shrines in a separate category and arranged for Buddhist temples and Shinto groups, other than shrines, to organize under an abbot as independent denominations. Some groups that did not naturally fall into the new category of Sectarian Shinto arbitrarily arranged their rules and teachings to conform to the legal requirements. Ultimately thirteen separate denominations were established and received recognition (*kyōka*)<sup>c</sup> by the government as belonging to Sectarian Shinto.

In the second place, since there were thirteen separate and distinct sects, the group as a whole should not be called "a sect."

In the third place, although these sects were recognized before the war, at present no religious sect is officially recognized by the government.

In the fourth place, it is incorrect to say that Sectarian Shinto was ever "under the special sanction of the Emperor" in the sense that it had a higher status than Buddhist sects, for example. The thirteen sects had the same status as Buddhist sects.

Today, Tenri-kyō<sup>d</sup> and Konkō-kyō<sup>e</sup> no longer consider themselves as Shinto sects. They regard themselves as independent, unique religions. Nevertheless, they continue to be affiliated with the Sectarian Shinto Federation because only in this way can they participate in the over-all activities of the Religions League of Japan.

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a. 教派神道 b. 寺社奉行 c. 許可 d. 天理教 e. 金光教

## QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

### **Can foreign religious denominations own property in Japan ?**

Article 36 of the Civil Code reads :

(Recognition of a foreign juristic person, its competency)

With the exception of States, administrative divisions of States and trading companies, the existence of foreign juristic persons shall not be recognized ; however, this shall not apply to such juristic persons as are recognized by laws or treaties.

Foreign juristic persons recognized in accordance with the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall enjoy the same private rights as those of the same classes of juristic persons formed in Japan ; however, this shall not apply to such rights as aliens cannot enjoy, or to those in respect of which any different provisions are made in laws or treaties.

To own property in Japan representatives of a foreign religious organization must either incorporate under the Religious Juridical Persons Law or under Article 34 of the Civil Code which reads :

An association or foundation relating to worship, religion, charity, science, art or otherwise relating to public interests and not having for its object the acquisition of gain may be made a juristic person subject to the permission of the competent authorities.

### **Can a Christian missionary in Japan perform a wedding ceremony ?**

Yes. However, the religious ceremony has no legal validity.

Article 739 of the Civil Code reads :

(Notification of marriage)

A Marriage becomes effective by notification thereof in accordance with the provisions of the Family Registration Law.

The notification mentioned in the preceding paragraph shall be made by both the parties and two or more witnesses of full age either orally, or by a document signed by them.

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

(April—June)

**April 1** —Plans announced for the construction of a new cathedral in Osaka near the site of the death of the famous Gratia Hosogawa.

**April 5** —The Christian Liaison Committee sent a letter to Mr. Tō Matsunaga, Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party's special committee on the Religious Juridical Persons Law in which attention was called to the fact that the Japan Buddhist Association, the Sectarian Shinto Federation, The Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan, as well as the Christian Liaison Committee are all opposed to granting special status to the Grand Shrine of Ise, and that in the religious world only the Association of Shinto Shrines favors it.

**April 8** —His Eminence Peter Tatsuo Cardinal Doi returned to Japan.

—Buddhist leaders attended a four-day Afro-Asian Conference at New Delhi, India, on Tibet and anti-

colonialism.

**April 10** —The Association of Shrine Shinto Youth of Kyoto decided to enlarge its scope to include the youth of Shinto sects.

**April 13** —A new convent of the Notre Dame Sisters in Kusatsu was blessed. This is the first mission parish work to be undertaken by this group.

**April 13** —The executive committee of the Tokyo Association of Buddhists met to discuss problems raised by the Ministry of Welfare notice of March 8th., regarding the interment of ashes without religious rites prescribed by the temple concerned. (see p. 91)

**April 14** —Risshō Kōsei Kai opened a new branch in Osaka.

—Myōchi Kai celebrated the 60th anniversary of the founder, Mrs. Mitsui Miyamoto.

**April 16** —The executive board of the Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan discussed granting special status to the Grand



## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

Shrine of Ise.

**April 17** —Goodwill Athletic Meet in Kansai sponsored by the Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan.

—The National Christian Council executive committee voted to approve special status for Yasukuni Shrine on condition that it be divested of its religious character.

**April 19** —Sōka Gakkai executive board selected Mr. Daisaku Ikeda (32) as its president.

**April 20** —A new college offering courses in domestic science was opened in Tokyo by the Salesian Sisters.

**April 21** —A round-the-world Catholic Relief Services party composed of eleven monsignori, six priests, and four laymen arrived in Japan for a four-day inspection of Catholic relief work in Japan.

**April 22** —The Association of Supporters of the Grand Shrine of Ise (Jingū Hōsan Kai) elected Mr. Kiyoshi Tanaka associate chief priest of the shrine, as chairman of the board of directors.

**April 24** —Over one thousand Catholics, clergy and laity, gathered at St. Ignatius Church in Tokyo

to honor Japan's first cardinal. Dr. Kōtaro Tanaka, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and a number of members of the diplomatic corps were present.

**April 26** —According to *Jinja Shimpo* (*Shrine News*), eleven prefectural assemblies and 545 local councils have passed resolutions requesting the granting of special status to Yasukuni Shrine.

—The National Association of Shrine Shinto Women, of which Mrs. Yasuko Takatsukasa is president, held its eleventh central committee meeting at the Ōmi Shrine. The association has branches in thirty-six prefectures.

—Shikoku District of the United Church passed a resolution against the US-Japan Security Treaty.

—Nishi Chūgoku District of the United Church passed a resolution against the US-Japan Security Treaty.

**May 1** —The Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan inaugurated radio "evangelism" in Osaka. The P L Church is on the air on Monday mornings and the Ennō-kyō on Wednesdays.

**May 3** —The twenty-second

# CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

general assembly of Sōka Gakkai approved the election of Mr. Daisaku Ikeda as its third president.

—The Chūgai Nippō conducted a conference on the graveyard problems.

—Christian rally against ratification US-Japan Security Treaty held at Shiba Public Hall in Tokyo, 800 attended. (Similar rallies were held in Osaka (18th), Kobe (22nd) and Kyoto (22nd), attendance 300.)

**May 5** —Myōchi Kai inaugurated a national youth organization.

**May 6** —The following persons were appointed by the Minister of Education as members of the Religious Juridical Persons Council: Prof. Rokusaburō Nieda (Waseda University),

Prof. Junshō Ōta (Jōdo Shin)

Rev. Zenta Watanabe (United Church of Christ—Protestant)

Mr. Hideo Takeshima (Association of Shinto Shrines)

Rev. Shundō Kurimoto (Jōdo Sect)

Mr. Arata Furuya (Association of Shinto Shrines)

Prof. Yoshio Kobayashi (Sophia University—Catholic)

Mr. Kenzō Ahara. (Former member of the Religious Affair Bureau,

Ministry of Education)

Rev. Ryūden Abe (Shingon Sect)

Prof. Hideo Kishimoto (Tokyo University)

Rev. Tokuchika Miki (P L Church)

Mr. Juichi Shimomura (Former chief Religious Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Education)

Rev. Kenichi Shishino (Fusō-kyō)

Mr. Keigorō Moroi (Tenri-kyō)

Rev. Kankyō Mochizuki (Nichiren Sect)

**May 8** —Bishop Dominic Noguchi of Hiroshima was consecrated in Rome by His Holiness Pope John XXIII.

**May 10** —An Association of Outcasts (Dōwa Kai) was organized in Tokyo with Mr. Nobuo Sugimoto of Nishi Honganji as Vice President. (There are approximately three million former outcasts, of which an estimated sixty-five percent are adherents of the Nishi Honganji Sect. Discrimination persists in spite of its legal abolition.)

—A ground-breaking ceremony was observed for a new high school in Higashi Muroran, Hokkaidō, to be conducted by the Benedictine Sisters.

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

**May 13** —The International Catholic Migration Commission opened a liaison office in the National Catholic Committee building in Tokyo.

**May 14** —The first volume of the Taishō edition of the Mahayana sutras will be reprinted this summer. The complete set of eighty-eight volumes will be published during the next seven years.

**May 17** —Mr. Giken Itō, President of Buddhist Democratic Party announced its opposition to the new US—Japan Security Treaty on the grounds that it (1) violates the Constitution, (2) is a military alliance, and (3) subjects Japan to the will of the United States. However, the resolution embodying this opposition, admits the necessity of the Self Defense Forces.

**May 18** —Buddhist temples in Tokyo organized a special committee on the graveyard problem.

**May 21** —The advisors of the Association of Shinto Shrines held a conference to promote special status for the Grand Shrine of Ise and the re-establishment of February 11 as National Foundation Day.

**May 23** —The executive commit-

tee of the Tokyo District of the United Church of Christ in Japan, having learned that World Vision is an organization which draws support from donors of many different denominations, decided at a two-day conference that member-churches, if they so desire, should feel entirely free to cooperate in the proposed 1961 Tokyo Crusade.

**May 26** —The 48th annual meeting of the Association of Christian Schools met for a two-day session at Kobe College. Mayor Gizō Takayama of Kyoto, a Christian, was the guest speaker. Prior to the meeting the executive committee met at Kansei Gakuin on the 25th and representatives of forty-two member-schools that are affiliated with the Interboard Committee for Christian Work in Japan met at the Takarazuka Hotel under the chairmanship of Dr. Ganjō Kosaka, former president of Aoyama Gakuin.

—Ninth general meeting of the Association of Shinto Nursery Schools and Kindergartens was held at the headquarters of the Association of Shinto Shrines.

**May 27** —Two young Japanese

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

Catholics attended the first world congress in Lourdes, France, of the Catholic International Farm Youth Movement.

—Sōka Gakkai is reported to have set as its goal the conversion of three million new families during the next four years. The believers of Risshō Kōsei Kai, also a Nichiren-related faith, are its special target.

—Eleventh annual meeting of the Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies opened at Waseda University.

**May 29** —Eighth annual meeting of the Japan Buddhist Federation opened at Kanazawa. Special consideration was given to (1) relief for Chilean earthquake sufferers, (2) US-Japan Security Treaty and (3) the graveyard issue.

—The Kōdō Church, a modern Buddhist sect which has its headquarters in Yokohama, plans to construct a pagoda at a cost of more than \$400,000 during the next seven years.

**May 31** —The Myōshinji Sect of Rinzai (Zen) Buddhism is planning to open thirty-three propaganda centers in the United States.

**June 1** —The Risshō Kōsei Kai has changed the manner of writing its name in Japanese. The name is now 立正佼成会, instead of 立正交成会.

**June 4** —Twenty-eight leaders of the Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan met with Prime Minister Kishi and leaders of the Liberal Democratic Party and assured them of their support as well as their willingness to cooperate in welcoming President Eisenhower.

—Five hundred people gathered at the Tōjō Hall in Tokyo to celebrate the 82nd birthday of Dr. Frank Bookman, founder of MRA.

**June 5** —According to newspaper reports, 260,000 people worshipped at the Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya where the sacred sword, one of the three Imperial Regalia, is enshrined.

**June 6** —The Tokyo YWCA executive board decided to hold nationwide noon-time prayer meetings and urged the 15,000 members of city and school associations to protest against the "illegal" action of the Diet on May 20th. After the meeting most of those present

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

joined demonstrators at the Diet building.

**June 7** —Ten teachers of Toyo Eiwa Girls School drafted a protest against ratification of the US-Japan Security Treaty and sent the same to all Christian schools in Japan requesting that signatures be collected for it.

**June 8** —One hundred sixty-two professors of Aoyama Gakuin Girls Junior College signed a statement protesting against the Kishi administration and calling for a dissolution of the Diet.

**June 10** —Fifty-one YWCA secretaries signed a protest against the present government calling for dissolution of the Diet and postponement of President Eisenhower's visit to Japan.

—Dr. Takeshi Mutō, chairman of the National Christian Council expressed regret for the Hagerty Incident at the Tokyo International Air Port.

—The Rev. Sen Shigenaga, chief priest of the Asakusa Honganji in Tokyo, resigned.

**June 11** —Mr. Eijiun Ōtani, prominent Buddhist member of the Liberal Democratic Party withdrew

from the party because of differences of opinion over the US-Japan Security Treaty.

—Organization ceremony of the Buddhist Political League held at the Industrial Club in Tokyo.

—The Rev. Tokuchika Miki, Patriarch of the P L Church and party departed on a world tour.

—The site of a new women's dormitory for Sophia University was blessed.

**June 12** —The site of a new Notre Dame College in Kyoto was blessed.

**June 13** —The executive committee of the National Christian Council discussed the question of inviting a representative of the Social Democratic Party to speak to it on the current political situation.

—The National Christian Council executive committee declined to consider a petition to urge postponement of President Eisenhower's visit.

**June 14** —Twenty-four Christian leaders decided in their individual capacity to welcome President Eisenhower and communicated their decision in a letter delivered to the American Embassy.



## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

—A two-day general conference of the Christian Social Work Association met at Kōfu, Yamanashi Prefecture with more than seventy representatives in attendance.

**June 16** —In regard to the violent mass demonstration which took place on the evening of June 15, leaders of the United Church of Christ in Japan are quoted as follows by the Kirisuto Tsūshin (*Christian News Service*):

Dr. Michio Kozaki—"Christians are responsible for the incident, Violence must not be permitted. We must defend democracy." Rev. Kōzō Kashiwai—"I was with the demonstrators. I realize that the students have a different philosophy. We must begin a new movement of our own." Rev. Yoon Tai Ō—"I know what communism is. Japanese Christians are supporting the Communist movement." Rev. Iwao Niwa: "It is a good thing that Eisenhower's visit has been postponed. The situation would have been very grave if he had come."

—Dr. Bob Pierce of World Vision held a conference with Christian leaders at the International Kanko

Hotel in Tokyo to discuss the proposed Tokyo Crusade scheduled for May, 1961.

—Fifty-one YMCA secretaries out of 114 signed a letter requesting (1) postponement of the proposed visit of President Eisenhower, (2) resignation of Prime Minister Kishi, and (3) dissolution of the Diet.

—Ten members of the executive committee of the National Christian Council requested an emergency meeting of the Council's executive committee in order to advise Prime Minister Kishi to postpone president Eisenhower's visit to Japan.

—Three ministers of the United Church of Christ in Japan visited the Metropolitan Police Headquarters to advise postponement of the visit of President Eisenhower, the resignation of the Kishi cabinet, and to protest the alleged brutal treatment of Christians at the June 15 demonstrations.

**June 17** —A special meeting of the National Christian Council executive committee decided to cable the National Council of Churches of Christ USA urging postpone-

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

ment of the President's proposed visit.

—Following his consecration Bishop Dominic Noguchi of Hiroshima visited France, Spain, Belgium and Germany.

—Members of the National Christian Council executive committee met with representatives of the Social Democratic Party, Messrs. Katsumata and Kanichi Nishimura of the Lower House, to hear a report on the political situation. Forty persons attended.

**June 18** —Eleven ministers of the United Church of Christ in Japan visited the chief of Metropolitan Police requesting that the police not use their clubs in connection with demonstrations by the general public as if they were dealing with bandits.

**June 20** —The Japan Home Bible Society celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The society has distributed 248,000 Bibles and portions.

**June 23** —More than twenty chairmen of the district Social Committees of the United Church of Christ in Japan, meeting in Hakone for two-days, adopted resolutions

calling for the immediate dissolution of the Diet and opposition to granting special status to the Grand Shrine of Ise, Yasukuni Shrine, and Meiji Shrine.

—The Christian Liaison Committee decided to establish a Christian Cemetery in Saitama Prefecture.

**June 24** —The nineteenth anniversary of the establishment of the United Church of Christ in Japan was observed.

—Three hundred twenty-four poems were submitted in a contest conducted by the Committee for the Revision of the Hymnal of the Catholic Church, of which 140 passed the first screening.

**June 27** —Dr. Floyd Shacklock, secretary of the Literature Department of the National Council of Churches of Christ, USA, stopped over in Japan to conduct a two-day conference at Sanmai-so in Hakone.

**June 29** —The Education Association of Christian Schools held a conference of primary school teachers at Toyo Eiwa Primary School. 243 teachers of fourteen schools attended.

## TRANSLATIONS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

The following documents were issued by the Ministry of Welfare in connection with the current controversy over the right of a temple to refuse permission to inter ashes in cases in which the religious faith of an applicant and the temple concerned are different.

Notice: Eikan Hatsu No 8

March 8, 1960

From: Chief, Division of Environment Sanitation  
Bureau of Public Health  
Ministry of Welfare

To: Chiefs of Departments of Sanitation of Tokyo and other Prefectural Governments and Designated Municipal Governments.

Subject: Interpretation of Article 13 regarding Cemeteries and Interment.

The administrators of cemeteries owned by religious organizations are reported to have refused to allow interment (*maisō*, *maizō*) requested by people whose faith is different from the religious organizations which own the cemeteries concerned. Aware that this is a problem related to religious affiliation and productive of undesirable effects from the standpoint of public health, as per Enclosure No. 1, we requested the Cabinet Legislative Bureau for an interpretation of

Article 13 (of the law) Concerning Cemeteries and Interment.

Enclosed is a copy of the reply. (Enclosure No. 2)

It is hoped that the application of the Law will be in accordance with this interpretation. [Notice] Eikan No. 88 (August 22, 1949) regarding Article 13 (issued by the Chief, Division of Environment Sanitation, Ministry of Welfare to Chief, Metropolitan Bureau of Public Health) is hereby recinded.

TRANSLATIONS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

From: Kazuo Yamanouchi  
Chief, First Section  
Legislative Bureau

To: Iku Omura  
Chief, Division of Public Health  
Ministry of Welfare

Subject: Interpretation of Article 13 of the Law concerning Cemeteries and Interment.

The following is in reply to your inquiry of December 24, 1959 (Ei Hatsu 1,280).

The Law concerning Cemeteries and Interment (Law No. 48, 1948, hereinafter referred to as "the Law") states in Article 13 that administrators of cemeteries, ash repositories and crematories shall not refuse requests for the interment in a grave of a body (*maisō*) or ashes (*maizō*), the interment of ashes in a crypt (*shūzō*) or cremation (*kasō*) without due reason, and that those who violate this article shall be punished in accordance with Article 21, paragraph 1.

The reason for this limitation on the administrators of cemeteries, ash repositories, and crematories is that if the administrators are permitted to reject without reason a client's request, then the inter-

ment in a grave of a body (Article 2, paragraph 1), the interment of ashes in a grave or crypt, or cremation (Article 2, paragraph 2) become difficult to enforce, ill-feeling is aroused among the bereaved and those related to the deceased, and problems of public health arise which may menace public welfare (cf. Article 1).

According to the intent of the Law, when a cemetery is owned by a religious organization, the administrator of [such a] cemetery has no right to refuse burial of a body or ashes in a grave, or interment in a crypt of ashes brought in by a bereaved person whose faith is different from the faith of the administering religious organization. Difference of faith can not be recognized as "due reason" [for refusal].



## TRANSLATIONS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

Attention must be paid to the fact that interment in its literal sense means the act of burying a body or ashes in the earth (see Law Article 2, paragraph 1), with the consideration which social commonsense requires and does not include denominational rites and services which often accompany interment. In other words, Article 13 sets forth the principle of not refusing a client's request concerning interment (*maisō, maizō*) and should not be interpreted as requiring compliance with a client's wishes concerning the rituals [observed] at the time of interment. That is to say, such ceremonial matters are not the concern of the Article. This problem should be settled on the basis of an agreement between the client and the administrator

of the cemetery who has the right of control over the cemetery land.

A religious organization which owns a cemetery may set up regulations that in connection with interment the administrator shall perform the rituals of the religious organization [concerned]. Consequently, when a client, whose faith is different from the owner of the cemetery, insists on holding services of his own faith, the administrator of the cemetery has no obligation to meet the wishes of the client. Moreover, if both parties cannot reach an agreement on the method of service to be observed, the client may be obliged to withdraw the request for interment, but this has nothing to do with Article 13 itself.

**Note:** The above notification has not settled the matter. The argument continues. Ed.



## INSTITUTE NEWS

### Apropos the Round Table Conferences

- I am very glad to have had the golden opportunity of frankly talking together, removing the fence, and sharing board and room together. It is of deep significance that we were able to exchange opinions from the common standpoint of human beings.
- I have found it is very difficult to have mutual understanding among religions. It is necessary for us to have many such conferences.
- I am very glad that we could have this friendly discussion, and that each of us could understand the faith of the others.
- Ten years later I would like to attend a meeting with the same members present.
- This conference made me perceive the importance of religion today.
- I am sorry that we did not have enough time to discuss things fully.
- I was able to get an understanding of other religions, which could not be gotten through books.
- I was able to understand not only other religions, but about the merits and demerits of my own religion.
- I felt that we were able to cooperate in dealing with common problems and objectives.

### Another bouquet

Yesterday I received.....The Kami Way, and the first issue of Contemporary Religions in Japan. Congratulations on both of those publications." (Ottawa, Kansas)

# TO APPEAR IN FUTURE ISSUES

## Articles

Round Table Conference on "Religion and the Japanese People."

Participants: Dr. Ichi Oguchi, Tokyo University  
Dr. Saburo Ienaga, Tokyo Education University  
Dr. Kazo Kitamori, Tokyo Union Theological Seminary  
Dr. Tsunamasa Furuya, (Chairman)

(The above originally appeared on NHK sponsored programs)

A report of three Institute-sponsored round table conferences on "Religion and Social Life" and "Religion and Modernization." These conferences were participated in by thirteen young Buddhists, eight Christians, six Shintoists, and five from other religions.

Prepared by Associate Professor Yoshirō Tamura  
Tōyō University.

## TWENTY PAGE STATISTICAL SUPPLEMENT

on  
Religions in Japan

## MODERN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN JAPAN

by Sect Founders and Leaders

World Messianity  
(Sekai Kyūsei Kyō)

Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō  
(The so-called Dancing Religion)

Risshō Kōsei Kai  
Seichō-no-Ie  
Sōka Gakkai

## Book Reviews

Smith's "Confucianism in Modern Japan"

By Hideo Kishimoto, Tokyo University

"Toshi Ji-in no Shakai-teki Kinō" ("The Social Activities of City Temples.")—A study sponsored by The Cultural Interchange Institute for Buddhists.

By Yoshirō Tamura, Tōyō University

Religious Studies in Japan edited by Japanese Association for Religious Studies and Japanese Organizing Committee of the Ninth International Congress for the History of Religions

By Dr. Richard Bush  
Southern Methodist University  
Dallas, Texas